

LONGSWORD,

EARL of SALISBURY.

A N

HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

VOLUME THE SECOND.



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THE NEW WORLD

OF CALIFORNIA

A NOVEL

VOLUME THE SECOND



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L O N G S W O R D,

Earl of SALISBURY.

B O O K IV.

S E C T. I.

IN the religious house to which Oswald had retired, was a Monk, called Reginhald, whose mind but ill suited his profession, or his residence in a seat of piety. He was brother to Grey, and by his interest had been not long since admitted into the Monastery, and promoted to some degree of dignity and authority. His manners were equally brutal with those of Grey, but less disguised by art and hypocrisy. He was like him, abject and servile, but by no means so well skilled in the arts of flattery: insolent and assuming, but not careful to distinguish between those who feared and those who defied his power. Hence was he frequently controuled and mortified by his brethren, whom he dreaded from a consciousness of his own excesses; and who detested and scorned him indeed, yet feared the power which supported, or seemed to support him. They regarded his brother as the favourite of Lord Raymond, and Lord Raymond as heir to the house of Salisbury, and already possessed of all its greatness. To purchase his protection, therefore, they turned their eyes from his offences, and suffered him to disgrace and disturb their house by scandalous excesses, utterly subversive of holy discipline and order. Drunkenness, and riot, and lewdness, had oftentimes profaned their walls with impunity. They
lamented

lamented these enormities of their unworthy brother; but, instead of disclosing and punishing them, lamented to each other in secret, lest they should forfeit the favour and protection of Lord Raymond; although the miscreant had been scarcely known, and was utterly unnoticed and disregarded by this Lord.

Grey had conceived a sudden hope of preventing the effects which the flight of Oswald threatened, by means of this Reginhald; and, if not of gaining young William into his own power, at least of preventing any emissaries from spreading the intelligence of his escape to sanctuary, and the distresses of his mother. This it was that determined him to depart instantly, and to visit this monastery! but his brother, active and officious in every deed of baseness, had already prevented his desires, Oswald had happily reached the monastery, and Reginhald was among the first to demand the reason of his appearance. Scarcely could he restrain his passion until Oswald had completed his story; and, then, burst forth with unbounded rage into the vilest and severest reproaches. He charged him with falsehood and treachery; declared himself resolved instantly to learn the real nature of his crime, and purpose of his flight; and, for this reason, to repair in person to the castle. In the mean time, with an assumed air of authority, he ordered that this fugitive should be strictly guarded, and kept from all intercourse till his return. Oswald heard his brutal virulence and passion, not without some terror, which was noted, and regarded as an indication of guilt. The directions of Reginhald were obeyed, and he himself now hastened to inform his brother of this event. He met him when he had but just rode a few paces from the castle; whither Grey instantly returned with the Monk.

They retired to a private conference with equal eagerness, and with minds equally prepared for outrage or treachery. The Monk prevented the enquiries of his brother, by relating what had just now passed at the monastery. Grey expressed a fullen joy, when informed that Oswald was closely guarded, and, for
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the present, effectually prevented from spreading his saucy tale, or pursuing the design for which he had fled. He commended the zeal of Reginhald; and, seizing his arm with an aspect, earnest, and mysteriously solemn, he declared, that both their future fortunes depended on confining Oswald from all intercourse, and gaining young William into their own power and disposal. The rude Monk, whose first thoughts were ever to recur to violence, instantly declared for seizing both, and forcing them from their retreat: but he was stopped by Grey, who censured such procedure as dangerous and unwarrantable; and pronounced it necessary to pursue measures the most deliberate and most cautiously concerted. He proceeded to disclose all the transactions of Lord Raymond from his first arrival at the castle of Salisbury, all the efforts made to shake the constancy of Elay, and all the opposition and disdain of that proud Countess. He began to explain how much their fortunes must be advanced by finding means of conquering her resolution, and by the final success of Lord Raymond in obtaining full and indisputable possession of the lands and dignities of the house of Salisbury. But Reginhald, conscious that his own security from disgrace and punishment depended on the influence and protection of this Lord, needed no inducement to concur in the designs and practices of his brother. He broke in upon his discourse with a passionate heat, and loudly condemned all his late proceedings. 'Why,' said he, 'was not I made acquainted with your difficulties? why were not their hands forcibly joined? I should have at once pronounced the nuptial benediction over them, and without regard to female pride or scruples, have united them for ever in those bands, which no human power can rend asunder.'—Grey again began to condemn his violence, and to urge the necessity of caution, when their conference was suddenly interrupted by a domestic, who surprised them by declaring that he sought the Monk, and had in charge to conduct him to the Countess.

The mind of this unhappy lady had long been violently agitated, the true cause of that languor and malady which oppressed her gentle frame. The hopes she had conceived of the safety of her son, and the speedy arrival of friends and deliverers, had acted on her harassed spirits like a powerful medicine, and checked the progress of her disorder. She had now leisure to turn her thoughts to her husband, and to weigh those accounts of his fate which Oswald had rashly conveyed to her. The idea of his disloyalty was piercing: she revolved it frequently: she reasoned on the intelligence she had received; she believed; she doubted; she indulged her suspicions; and strove to banish them, by turns. Ill were those reflections suited to restore her impaired health; yet she dwelt upon them. The faithful Elinor, from whom she could not conceal her thoughts, in vain endeavoured to compose her distractions, and to allay her inward grief: still she tormented herself with reflections on the supposed falsehood of her Lord, and on his unhappy fate; when the attendant casually discovered from a window the approach of Reginald, and observed with some surprise that a religious man, who by his habit seemed of the neighbouring monastery, was now entering the castle. ‘He comes with news of my son,’ said the Countess hastily; ‘Let him be called hither. — And, alas, this distracted breast hath but too much need of spiritual counsel and comfort.’

A domestic was instantly dispatched to seek the Monk; who now appeared before the Countess. Naturally base and mean, and never before admitted into such a presence, he stood abashed and confused; and the consciousness of his own vile purposes served to increase his disorder. His aspect, in which the sensual and malignant passions had fixed their seat, and his deportment, which was that of the rude hind or midnight brawler, not of the holy and lettered clerk, were surveyed by the Countess with sudden disgust. She shuddered, as at the view of some loathsome animal: yet, assuming a placid air, and endeavouring to conceal

conceal her dislike, she asked of his order and residence. No sooner had he named the brotherhood of Sarum, than raising herself from the couch on which she leaned, 'You then' said she, 'bring me news of my son—dispatched to acquaint me with his safe arrival within your holy walls—Is it not so?' Reginhald coldly answered, that her son was safe, and had been deposited in the monastery by his conductor. The Countess, with clasped hands and earnest accents, uttered a prayer for his protection. Elinor was tenderly affected; and uniting her fervours with those of her beloved mistress, commended young William to every saint and holy angel. The Monk stood unmoved, and scarcely could assume the appearance of devotion, just as far as to pronounce a cold assent to their petitions. The Countess was on the point of imploring his protection for her son, but the disgust which she had conceived at his aspect, and which was increased by his demeanour, repressed that thought. She contented herself with speaking her hopes in general, that his innocence and his wrongs would not fail to raise him friends in the house of piety and charity. She spoke of the oppression which she herself had suffered, in terms of bitterness and indignation: and seemed to demand, as her just right, the vigorous interposition of every good man for her relief, but more especially the dutiful and faithful offices of those holy men who had experienced her favour and munificence. The silence of Reginhald gave her an occasion of repeating and enforcing her discourse: but her discourse was directed to an unfriendly ear. The wicked Monk had fixed his eyes upon an object, which totally diverted his attention from the Countess. Near her couch there stood a table, on which, among some female ornaments, was deposited a ring, an ancient and precious jewel, which had long been the distinguishing ornament of her noble house, and bore its ensigns armorial curiously impressed. The sight of this instantly suggested a treacherous purpose to the Monk; for which it was necessary to possess himself of the jewel. His situa-

tion was convenient for seizing it, unnoticed by Ela or her attendant. He watched a favourable moment to convey it to his bosom; and, having once secured his prize, he was more at leisure to answer the discourse of the Countess, to assume some appearance of gravity, and to affect the dignity and spiritual authority of his function. He declared, that, within their walls, her son could not suffer wrong: but that it was necessary to send him thither for protection. Nature and the royal pleasure pointed to his noble kinsman Raymond as his true protector. — The Countess prepared to express her indignation, but with an insolence which he mistook for grave authority; he warned her to beware of forward pride. ‘ Their liege Lord,’ he said, ‘ had graciously considered her widowed state, and provided relief and comfort. — Her hand, her affection, and her obedience were now due to Lord Raymond: such was the King’s command. Heaven had approved his kind purpose, and would not fail to punish that obstinacy and haughty perverseness, which rejected its blessings.’ — And dar’st thou, abandoned and hateful wretch,’ — thus did the Countess suffer her virtuous anger to break forth: ‘ Dar’st thou profane the name of heaven? art thou devoted to its service, and dost thou flatter the baseness, and wouldst thou promote the lewd purposes of him who hath renounced its laws, and defies its vengeance?’ — ‘ Thy obstinacy be upon thine own head!’ This was the reply of Reginhald, who was hardened against all reproof, and impatient to seek his brother. He turned away in sullen disdain, and left the Countess in wonder and just resentment at his brutal insolence; nor did this interview tend to allay the fears and suspicions of a fond mother. ‘ If the oppression of Lord Raymond could have its ministers and favourers among the professed votaries of religion, where might innocence find refuge; or where seek its just redress?’ She now dreaded that the sacred privileges of sanctaury might not find the due regard, as her enemy seemed to have corrupted the reverend brethren, and to have gained them over to his wicked purposes.

purposes. She wished she had contended with her malady, and accompanied her son; again she wished she had not rashly entrusted him to false and treacherous guardians. 'Her presence might have proved a sufficient protection to him: Raymond could not dare openly to have raised his arm against him: and surely the outrage and usurpation of this Lord could not long be concealed.' — Thus did she condemn her conduct, and torment her soul with gloomy and terrible imaginations; tho' yet unacquainted with the dangers and distress now prepared for herself and her son.

S E C T. II.

REGINHALD had sought his brother, and recounted all his interview with Ela. Grey still accused him of violence and turbulence, and urged the necessity of well-timed dissimulation, of art, caution, and smooth address. The Monk was provoked at this affectation of superior wisdom; and instead of retorting his reproof, displayed the stolen jewel, in silent and contemptuous triumph. Grey was too well versed in the arts of fraud and mischief, not to conceive at once, that this ring was to be used for deceiving the brethren of the monastery, or abusing Oswald, as occasions might require, by pretended orders and directions from the Countess. He viewed it eagerly, and regarded it, (not without reason) as an instrument of his purposes, too important to be intrusted wholly to the violent hands of Reginhald. He commended his zeal and address, which he, confidently promised, should, in due time, meet their full reward: he invited him to refreshment; reminded him of his fatigue: and that the hour of rest approached: he promised that by the dawn of morning, he himself would be ready to accompany him to the monastery, where he made no doubt of happily accomplishing their purposes, and laying a firm foundation of their future fortunes. Reginhald yielded to his instances, and retired. Grey re-

paired without delay to the apartment of Lord Raymond, and appeared before him with a face of joy and satisfaction. He congratulated him upon the prospect of a speedy and final accomplishment of his wishes: he briefly related the conduct of his brother at the monastery, his reception of Oswald, and the means already taken to prevent that traitor from officiously spreading his tale: he declared his purpose of seeking him instantly in his retirement; and was fully assured (he said) that by the assistance of the Monk, (whose zeal and vigilance he praised) he should be able to bring Oswald to that punishment which his falsehood merited, and to gain young William into his absolute disposal, the sure means of prevailing over the pride of Ela, and engaging her to a full compliance with his wishes. Raymond wondered; but Grey repeated his confident assurances of success, and departed with requesting his Lord patiently to wait the events, which the succeeding day must produce.

It was now night; but fraud and interested malice are strangers to rest. The Monk was wholly engaged by the thoughts of future favour and preferment; and Grey watched, like the great enemy of mankind, to ensnare the innocent, and to seduce the weak. He busily revolved in his mind the late transactions, and his future designs. He thought of an expedient which Reignhald had mentioned, that of forcibly joining the hands of Raymond and the Countess, and pronouncing the nuptial blessing without regard to her consent; an expedient which he now considered not as the suggestion of rashness and unexperienced heat, but such as the best guided policy might have recourse to, and such as their designs might necessarily require. In the mean time, he resolved, if possible, to reserve the disposal of young William to himself, and even to secrete him from Lord Raymond's power. If this Lord should prove successful, he might forget the services of his creature, or not reward them to the full extent of his wishes. The possession of this boy might hereafter enable him to revenge such neglect, by unexpectedly
pro-

producing a young heir to assert his rights: or if the Countess should be relieved from her present oppression, and her suitor recalled, or forced from her castle; the important service of restoring her son might atone for his former insolence, and shield him from punishment: or should it be necessary for his purposes to destroy this child; this might be done more securely in some place of private retirement; and more acceptably to his Lord, when executed without his knowledge or participation. His own interest was the sole object of his thoughts; and as to the means of advancing it; to him, all were equally indifferent.

The dawn of morning stole upon him, while he was anxiously engaged in these reflections: and Reginhald now stood before him, urging him to pursue his intended course without further delay. He first summoned some chosen vassals of Raymond, and, in the name of that Lord, ordered them to follow his steps at some distance, and to hold themselves ready to obey his orders. The brothers then took their way, and soon reached the monastery. Here they found, that, notwithstanding the directions of Reginhald, the Lord Abbot had been made acquainted with the arrival of Oswald; had examined him in person, had heard, and was duely affected by his story; promised him protection, and that he would assist in all honest means of gaining redress for the injured Countess; and that at this very time he was shut up in the apartment of Oswald, hearing, examining, and enquiring still more minutely into the circumstances of all those events which he related with so much confidence, and with such appearance of integrity. The brothers congratulated each other on arriving so opportunely; and, at their desire were conducted into the same apartment. Oswald started and trembled at the sight of Grey; who, with a demeanour grave and solemn, and with well affected humility, addressed himself to the Abbot in the following manner:

‘ Reverend father! This humane attention to the appearance of distress will be rewarded; and heaven forefend but that it should meet the just return of

' praise from every honest tongue: nor is there less
 ' honour due to your pious and charitable cares, be-
 ' cause, in the present case, they are not called forth
 ' by real danger or calamity. You have entertained
 ' a fugitive already pardoned by his Lord; and an
 ' infant whom his fond mother is at this moment im-
 ' patient to embrace. — You wonder: but, vouchsafe
 ' me a favourable ear, I shall unfold what seems so
 ' strange and perplexing. This venerable brother-
 ' hood must have heard how the royal favour hath
 ' been extended to Lord Raymond, hath invested
 ' him with all the power and dignity of the house of
 ' Salisbury, hath consigned to his protection the wi-
 ' dow of that noble house, and destined his hand for
 ' that of the gentle Countess. When Raymond first
 ' arrived at her castle, to execute the orders of his
 ' liege Lord, he found her, alas! sunk deep in sor-
 ' rowful reflections on the fate of her unhappy Lord,
 ' and but ill disposed to listen to his honourable
 ' passion; nor could his noble nature permit him to
 ' break in too precipitately upon her melancholy, by
 ' declaring his suit, and demanding her consent.' —
 Here Oswald would have interrupted his discourse,
 but Grey, with a mild, yet commanding look, claim-
 ed a free and undisturbed audience. The Abbot
 seemed to assent; and the crafty minion proceeded
 thus: ' A decent interval of retirement was allowed
 ' to her grief; and in the mean time her suitor was
 ' entertained with the respect due to his greatness:
 ' nor was she long a stranger to his purpose; nor did
 ' she disdain his suit, although she still deemed it
 ' dishonourable openly to admit a second lover,
 ' until she had fully paid her duty to the memory
 ' of Lord William. In this interval, heaven was
 ' pleased to afflict the unhappy Lady with severe sick-
 ' ness: her fever was violent, and long and obstinate
 ' was her delirium. She raved, I know not how, of
 ' force and oppression; she called upon her late Lord,
 ' who she declared was yet alive, now in her castle,
 ' and concealed from her by treachery and cruelty.
 ' She spoke of blood, of murder, of her son, his
 dangers

dangers and his enemies. Even when her bodily disorder began to abate, the disorder of her mind was still unconquered: nor were those wild visions yet dispelled, which had so long tormented her. Her Discourse indeed seemed more consistent, though the discourse of madness, and, unhappily, imposed on the weakness and inexperience of her attendants. They indulged her madness, and persuaded her to fly, for they believed that Lord Raymond was really her persecutor: who, on his part, was only anxious for her recovery. For this, were his prayers incessantly breathed to heaven. For this, did he bind himself by solemn vow, to reward the devotion of your house, with ample donations: nor was his piety unnoticed, or his prayers rejected. Scarcely had the distraction of this Lady prompted her to send away her son, and to retire from the castle, when heaven was pleased, as it were miraculously, to awaken her from her frightful dreams, and restore her unsettled reason. The first sign of recollection which she discovered, was, her orders to those who had been deceived by her distraction, and rashly conveyed her at midnight from her castle, to conduct her back again. She was obeyed, and instantly called for Lord Raymond, acknowledged her infirmity, and entreated his pardon and indulgence. He, noble and gentle Lord, expressed nothing but the most rapturous joy at this happy change; earnestly pressing her to reward his love, and crown his wishes. No longer now reluctant, or insensible to the happiness which heaven and the royal favour had ordained for her, she only requested that some little respite might still be granted, some time allowed to pay what farther duties the memory of her late Lord demanded. This holy father came opportunely to confirm her in those sentiments, and to direct her pious intentions. By his persuasions am I ordered to attend him hither, directed by Lord Raymond, to enquire by what means and in what manner he may most effectually discharge his vow, and by the gentle Countess to

‘ desire, that a solemn requiem shall, without delay, be performed by this reverend brotherhood to her departed Lord. I am still farther to declare, that she reflects with confusion on the late disorder of her mind, which had driven her young son from her arms; that she is impatient to embrace him; that, at her request to Lord Raymond, he hath freely and fully pardoned the flight of this his attendant. Nothing now remains, but that both return, and share in that general joy which reigns in the castle.’—The Abbot wondered, and hesitated; Oswald prepared to speak, but Grey again prevented him.—‘ To remove doubts, or scruples,’ said he, turning to Reginhald, ‘ let us produce the token of our truth and fairly delivered charge. Behold, Lord Abbot, this ancient ring, the well-known signet of the Countess, entrusted to us from her fair hand! By this she speaks her pleasure, that young William be instantly delivered to our care, that, without delay, we may conduct him to her noble presence.’

The Abbot had listened with suspicion and distrust, nor was his perplexity dissipated by the conclusion of this speech. The accounts which he had received from Oswald seemed natural and consistent; those of Grey subtle and improbable: and, yet, this ring was such an attestation of his truth and integrity, as seemed to warrant a full assent. He wavered for a while, but endeavoured to persuade himself that the orders which Grey delivered were real, and demanded his compliance; timorous by nature, and possessed with strong imaginations of the power of Raymond, and the danger of his displeasure. He therefore laboured to suppress all his doubts; affected to be fully convinced and satisfied; and consented to deliver up young William to be conducted back to his mother by the Monk and Grey; who dissembled their joy, and studied to compleat their success, by seducing Oswald from his retreat. They exerted all their artifice to persuade him that the resentment of his Lord had totally subsided; that he could not but consent to the desires
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of the gentle Countess, and forgive an honest though mistaken zeal for the service of a Lady, who in a few days was to be united with him, in the bands of love and wedlock. Oswald hesitated; he knew the falsehood of some part of what Grey had declared; yet he conceived that he must have delivered this jewel from the hand of the Countess, and by her command; and that, of consequence, she must have been reconciled to her suitor. He thought it natural, on such a reconciliation, to conceal some late transactions: thus he endeavoured to account for the misrepresentations of Grey: yet still he feared and doubted. — Grey, as by the authority of his Lord, and in his name, not only pronounced his full pardon, but assured him of favour and reward. The Abbot condemned his irresolution as weak and criminal, as highly prejudicial to his own interest, and an undutiful suspicion of the truth and honour of his master. The simplicity and inexperience of the vassal gave force to these solicitations; he dreaded to renew the displeasure of Raymond by delay or hesitation: he consented to return, and resigned himself to Grey, who now led away his victims in triumph.

The party which Grey had appointed to attend him, soon appeared in view, obeyed his signal, and advanced. At the sight of armed men, the misguided Oswald felt all his suspicions renewed; he trembled; and his fears were instantly confirmed. Grey, with an air of sullen authority, ordered him to be seized and bound; he attempted to expostulate, but was silenced with all the insolence of a successful malice, committed to a guard, and led away a prisoner to the castle; and, there, was this friend to the afflicted and oppressed consigned to the dreary dungeon. The infant heir of Salisbury was entrusted to others of the party, whose services Grey purchased by rich bribes, and in whom he chiefly confided. A kinsman he had upon the distant coast of Devon, to whom they were directed to convey their charge with strictest care. Thus he resolved to dispose of the young Lord for the present, as he relied on the attachment of this kinsman,

man, and by his means might hereafter remove him to some safe and secret residence, as his future purposes might require.

S E C T. III.

THUS far the wicked arts of Grey had been compleatly successful: and, now, he hastened to the presence of Lord Raymond with his flattering congratulations. He acquainted him in a few words, that all the mischief which the flight of Oswald had threatened was now effectually prevented; that he had safely disposed of young William with such guardians as were devoted to his, and to his master's service; and that the false slave who had attempted to betray him, was now his prisoner. Raymond wondered; embraced his minion, and applauded his address and vigilance. In his first violence of pride and resentment he pronounced that Oswald should instantly be hanged upon the next tree. But Grey restrained his passion; and entreated him to suspend the fate of this vassal; and to reserve the power of granting his forfeited life to the requests of Ela, if this might hereafter contribute to conciliate her regards. At the name of Ela, Raymond sighed, and turned upon his creature, with an aspect of perplexity and sorrow. 'Trust me,' said he, 'I am weary of this unprofitable pursuit; and would to heaven I had never seen this proud dame; never felt the power of her beauty! — This morning was I unexpectedly summoned to her presence. I saw the charming mourner: I saw her tortured with fears. She had just discovered the loss of an ancient ring, the usual ornament of her hand, and although she knows not by whom, or for what purpose, it may have been secreted, yet this incident hath awakened her suspicions, and she dreads some farther design upon her peace. But chiefly she fears for her son: she condemns her late conduct as weak and precipitate, and repents of having trusted the boy from her side.

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' At first, she made an effort to preserve her dignity, and, in the language of greatness and affected disdain, demanded how long my usurpation was to be continued. I interrupted her with humble and ardent expressions of love: she wept, and was still deaf to my solicitations. Yet, methought, she spoke of her late Lord with less pride and exultation. If, said she, he hath indeed paid the debt of nature, may heaven look on his offences with mercy, and protect his helpless infant, and injured widow! then, with earnest and affecting accents she entreated me to accept of all her wealth and magnificence, to indulge my wishes freely with the rich inheritance of her lordly house: but not to pursue the ruin of an helpless infant: to suffer his mother to follow him in peace; to hide her grief, and waste her few melancholy days in the holy retirement of the monastery. ——— O my friend, who could stand unmoved at her disorder? But I did not suffer all my emotion to break out. I contented myself, in general, with entreating her to banish all gloomy thoughts, to expect happy days, to study her real happiness, and to command it. I then retired, impatiently expecting your arrival, and your sage and friendly counsel.'

The success which had hitherto attended the practices and designs of Grey, gave him authority and consequence with his Lord, and encouraged him to urge his advice boldly and violently. When he had first informed him in general of the transactions of the monastery, he prest him to consider seriously that new incidents might arise, new dangers threaten him, which might not always be prevented. He spoke with severity of his irresolute and timid conduct: asked, if it was his purpose to abandon all his glorious hopes, to return disgraced and rejected; to encounter scorn and reproach, as a person unworthy of the regards of this Lady, presumptuous and unjust. Nothing could secure his honour from ruin, or perhaps his life from revenge, but his immediate nuptials with the Countess. Of this he spoke, as of an event absolutely in
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the power of Raymond, and delayed only by his mistaken tenderness. He was heard with earnest surprise: but when his Lord began to plead the difficulties he had encountered, and the obstinacy of Ela in denying her consent, he hastily interrupted him. —

‘ Let a day be appointed,’ cried this minion, ‘ for the celebration of your nuptials, let it be known through the land, let your attendants be ordered to prepare for this event, and your knights directed to hold themselves in such readiness as the joyful occasion requires. — Let the rest be my care.’ Raymond, who still preserved a tender affection for the Countess, and remembered with horror how dangerously she had been affected by the insolence of Grey, hesitated, and insisted on a full explanation of this mysterious language. Grey again urged the absolute necessity of prevailing in his present undertaking, both for his honour and his safety; the eternal infamy, nay, the utter impossibility of receding, after having already proceeded thus far. To this he added some artful praises of the Countess, and many animated observations on the happiness of that man who should possess such a treasure of beauty. When the passions of his Lord had by such discourse been raised to the utmost degree of fervour, he began to flatter his hopes: ‘ This Lady,’ said he, ‘ you at first found reluctant, and no wonder: for she had not been assured that Lord William was really no more. Of this she now seems persuaded, but regards his death as an event too recent, to admit another wooer. What though she hath discovered such impatience of your love? what though she hath attempted to escape from this place? would she not have persevered in her design? would she not have continued her flight, if this reluctance and aversion had not been artfully assumed to give her honour and respect in the general eye? She affects to summon friends to rescue her from your power; but she hopes that they will interpose, and persuade her to accept your hand: but do we delay ’till some new suiter shall arrive, and, under the pretence of relieving the oppressed,

‘pressed, and revenging her wrongs, shall successfully court her love, and build his own fortune on your disgrace and ruin?’ — Raymond was moved, and seemed ready to pay implicit obedience to the dictates of his creature. — Grey then spoke of the zeal of Reginhald his brother, and his entire devotion to the service of his noble patron. ‘This faithful Monk,’ said he, ‘will be of use. Observe the Countess for some days; continue your fond wooing with all modest and respectful duty, but with unabated zeal. She will soon experience that the flight of Oswald hath not proved effectual to collect her creatures round her: and the disappointment will depress her proud spirit, and convince her that her own and her son’s fate still depend on you. The day on which your attendants are taught to expect your nuptials, may perhaps find her consenting to your wishes: but why should we demand or expect her formal consent? Reginhald shall join your hands by virtue of his sacred authority, and pronounce the solemn benediction which shall make her yours for ever. Her heart shall secretly applaud this gentle violence. At least, her son, restored to her arms, shall be the purchase of your pardon.’ — Little of art was required to disguise or palliate the baseness of this design, so effectually had he prepared the mind of Raymond for its reception, by raising the storm of passions to darken and confound his reason. This Lord at once resigned himself to the guidance of his minion, and consented to pursue such measures as he should dictate. The Monk was now summoned before him, and appeared in the most abject abasement and servility. Raymond thanked him for his zeal, promised to repay his services, and ordered him to observe exactly the directions of his brother. Reginhald bowed lowly, and attempted to speak his duty and submission, but in disordered and ungraceful language; then retired with Grey.

These wicked agents, thus invested with full authority, and prompted by their hopes of interest and favour, vigorously pursued the work of oppression and
deceit,

deceit. Reginhald repaired to his monastery (so was he directed by his brother) where he urged the fathers to proceed, without delay, in their obsequies to the deceased Lord, as his widow now prepared, and had appointed a day for her second nuptials, which were only delayed, till these religious rites had first been duly performed. The reverend clerks were arrayed in their sacred vestments, and chaunted forth the solemn requiem. The neighbouring peasants caught the religious sounds, curiously enquired the cause of these extraordinary devotions, and spread the tidings of the intended marriage thro' the adjacent country. In the mean time, the attendants and domestics of Raymond were taught to expect the nuptials of their Lord on a day assigned, and ordered to hold them ready for this joyful event. The sound of busy preparation was loud thro' all the castle, and was heard even to the apartment of the Countess, who wondered, enquired, and was not long a stranger to the cause. She conceived it to be no other than an artifice of her importunate wooer, to deceive the friends of her house, and to destroy the credit of Oswald, her faithful emissary (of whose confinement she was yet uninformed.) With scorn and indignation she reflected on the base attempt to sully her bright fame, and to persuade her friends, that, in defiance of the strict restraints of decent widowhood, and the respect which the memory of a noble husband claimed, she had, within the space of a few months, listened to the solicitations of a new suitor, and consented to receive the hand of her oppressor. If the honour and reverence with which she reflected on Lord William had been somewhat impaired by her suspicions of his disloyalty, a new and more violent aversion to Lord Raymond now possessed her mind, and there still kept up an inflexible resolution never to acknowledge his pretensions to her inheritance, or to accept his love. In such dispositions she received the visits of this Lord with disdain, nor answered his tenders of affection, but by inveighing with all the bitterness of contempt and abhorrence against the mean deceit which he was

now

now practising. Raymond was abashed : he could not deny the accusation, but, with an ill-affected openness, declared that he had indeed assured his friends, that his wishes would be speedily crowned, as he would not suppose that she could ever continue thus unreasonably obdurate, and obstinately insensible to her own happiness.

Such were their interviews ; and such the fixed aversion and proud disdain of the Countess, unsubdued by oppression, grief, and fear. Her tedious and melancholy hours were still wasted in alarms for her son, in anxious expectation of relief ; of the arrival and vigorous interposition of her friends, and of the defeat and disgrace of her oppressor. In vain did she incessantly enquire, complain, condemn the slow procedure of those who should fly to assert her cause. No messenger of deliverance appeared, no voice of comfort did she receive : but on the morning of that day, which Raymond had presumptuously proclaimed his marriage-day, she still found herself the helpless and joyless prisoner of her false guest.

S E C T. IV.

RAYMOND, now on the point of executing his bold purpose, trembled with anxiety, doubt, and solicitude. Grey himself felt an inward agitation, although he laboured to encourage and confirm his Lord. The Monk alone stood stupidly insensible of the importance or of the baseness of the design. The attendants were disposed in their appointed stations ; and joy and festivity seemed prepared. The apartments of the Countess alone were sad and solitary, where Elinor was still suffered to perform all kind offices to her afflicted Lady. At the appointed hour, Raymond appeared before her, and first in gentle terms reproached her unkind coldness and severity ; but urged his love in a manner more bold and peremptory. She was silent : he renewed his instances : she breathed a deep sigh, and looked up to heaven as if

if complaining of her unmerited distress, her helpless state, which exposed her to these insolent and hateful solicitations. He seized her hand; she struggled to disengage herself, whilst her eyes darted fiery disdain. In that moment the brothers entered. At sight of Reginhald she shuddered with horror and dismay, though yet unacquainted with the purpose of his appearance. A solemn pause of silence ensued; the Countess trembling; Raymond confounded; and the brothers, who could not behold this disorder without some faint emotion, collecting new force, and arming themselves against the assaults of pity.

An encouraging glance from Grey, at length, emboldened his Lord to break silence. He conjured the Countess by all her hopes of peace, all the tenderness she felt for her darling son, no longer to delay her own happiness; no longer to continue thus perversely insensible of his just pretensions to her love. He now stood before her, he declared, to claim those rights which the royal favour had conferred upon him; that neither his honour nor his love, permitted him, any longer, to flatter her pride, or to indulge her weak scruples.—She fell upon her knees, and began to utter an earnest and passionate vow, that she never would consent to accept his hand; but Raymond and his associates quickly interrupted and raised her from the ground. Nor was her great spirit yet subdued by this rude violence: she turned upon them with looks of astonishment and disdain. Raymond entreated; Grey reproved her pride; and Reginhald denounced the vengeance of heaven against her obstinacy: whilst the tender mind of Elinor, wounded deeply by the distress of her dear mistress, thus surrounded with cruelty and oppression, eased itself in unavailing tears. Raymond still held the hand of Ela; and the impious Monk, who had waited for the signal from Grey, suddenly began to pronounce the marriage rites; but was instantly interrupted by loud and piercing shrieks frequently and violently repeated both by the Countess and her attendant. The unhappy Lady could not long

long support this violent emotion; she sunk down upon her couch; and Raymond hung over her with a mixture of tenderness and vexation. After a long interval of faint and breathless depression, she seemed to revive, and prepared to speak. Reginhald seized the moment of her recovery, and again began the holy office.—But in that instant a new and unexpected interruption checked his profane purpose, and confounded the base attempt of usurpation and cruel oppression. The sound of haste and trepidation seemed to approach the chamber. Raymond started! the brothers shook at the alarm; a voice was heard calling loudly on Grey. He issued forth; Raymond and the Monk followed: they saw a domestic pale and breathless with haste, who just found words to declare that Lord William was on his way, and would speedily reach the castle.

Not the condemned criminal when he receives his final sentence; not the sinner, yet unconfirmed in guilt, when the sudden crash of thunder appalls his spirit, ever shrunk into such abject consternation, as Raymond now experienced from this shocking intelligence. Grey was scarcely less confounded, although he feared only for his safety, and had no sense of wounded honour. They hastened into an adjacent apartment, where Reginhald alone was sufficiently composed to examine this messenger of terror; who informed them, that his appointed duty had led him to some distance from the castle, where he had discovered a small company of travellers, who, on his nearer approach, appeared in disorder and perplexity: that they had demanded his condition and place of residence, and on their part informed him, that they were the attendants and messengers of Lord William, who had landed on the coast of Cornwall, and was soon to resume the possession of his castle: the information they had receive on their way of the nuptials of the Countess had filled them with consternation; three of them had resolved to return and convey this intelligence to their Lord, whilst an equal number
now

now hastened forward, if possible to prevent so fatal a purpose. — ‘Behold!’ said he, pointing downwards from the window which commanded a full view of the castle-gates, ‘their speed hath equalled mine,’ and they are now entering.’ — Grey rushed out, and ordered the domestic to follow. He received the unwelcome guests with an appearance of respect. They were conducted to an apartment, and entertained with due courtesy by the man who had brought the news of their arrival, and who now had strict charge, that for a while they should be kept from any intercourse or conference with the other attendants.

A small ray of hope seemed to dart through the gloom which had possessed the mind of Grey, when he found that Lord William himself was not yet arrived. A little respite seemed of moment, as it allowed him to reflect, and to concert his future measures. At first, he thought of abandoning his Lord, and securing himself by flight; but although Raymond should not be able to revenge such desertion, the power and resentment of Lord Hubert were terrible, and could not fail to destroy him. Gay hopes of sharing in the riches of this great house of Salisbury, had long possessed his imagination; and he now felt the most implacable hatred of the man who was approaching to defeat these gay hopes. His malice and his fears conspired to recommend the most desperate course of action. He resolved to make one daring effort more, and, if possible, still to establish the pretensions of his master, and to remove his rival by a bold assassination.

In such dispositions did this wicked minion return to his Lord. He found him sunk in despair, and tortured with distraction. Scarcely had he begun to speak, when Raymond, starting up in frantic emotion, seized upon him with dreadful menaces of vengeance, as the treacherous murderer of his honour and his peace; and curst himself and his vile seducer in all the bitterness of remorse. Reginhald fled, and sought to hide himself from the terror of his resentment.

ment. Grey, without the least expostulation, the least attempt to allay the fury of his Lord, suffered the violence of passion to take its free course, and to waste its force in fruitless execrations. And soon was the storm allayed; and Raymond as if recovering from a sudden phrenzy, softened into grief and tenderness condemned his own extravagance, and entreated his favourite to advise, direct, and extricate him from this difficult and dangerous situation.

Grey neither endeavoured to palliate the disgrace, nor to lessen the danger, which his lord dreaded. He observed that Raymond had indeed proceeded so far as to leave no doubt that he had disregarded the conditions imposed by the King, and had attempted the most lawless acts of oppression. His own part in these transactions he represented as the effects of his unbounded zeal for the service of his master; a zeal which threatened to involve him in the fatal consequences of an injured husband's vengeance. Such discourse only served to irritate the pain which Raymond felt. 'Is there no way to retreat with honour?' cried he, 'no! nor with safety,' returned his minion, 'Let us not think of retreat. We are engaged, and must pursue our purpose. You wonder; but the way is obvious, and there is but one way. Perhaps this husband comes but slightly attended: you have Knights and men of arms. Nay, start not. Shall we tamely hold our throats, and receive death from him? No; this arm shall prevent the blow.' — Raymond had long been accustomed to resign himself to the guidance of this favourite: by him he had been gradually led on from one excess to the other; and so thoroughly was his mind prepared to receive the very worst impressions, (such is the fatal consequence of the first deviation from virtue) that, instead of trembling at this last proposal, he seemed only solicitous to know the surest means of effecting it. — And, here again, the favourite assumed that superiority which the pliant temper of his Lord, and an intimate acquaintance with his weakness and unjust designs

designs had given him. He desired that all future measures should be entrusted to him; that from him the attendants should be directed to receive their orders. Raymond acquiesced, yet not without the utmost anxiety, and most melancholy presages. His retirement was disturbed and painful: all the inhabitants of the castle plainly perceived that something extraordinary had occurred; something to disorder their Lord, and to perplex his designs. The Countess alone felt some degree of comfort: she fondly imputed the sudden retreat of her persecutors to some happy event which the flight of Oswald had produced, some appearance of her friends, or some accounts of their motions. Hence was her harassed mind enabled to recover from the violent shock which it had just now received.

In the mean time, the vigilant and crafty Grey, once more, sought the messengers of Earl William, who by this time were much alarmed at the manner of their reception. He met them with courteous looks, and declared, that the Countess, who was now ill at ease, and could not admit them to her presence, had sent to inform herself particularly of the intelligence which they brought. They related briefly the landing of William, the place of his present residence, and his intention of speedily returning to his own castle. Grey received the account with coldness and affected diffidence: he observed, that 'the most positive assurances had been received that Earl William had perished in France; that, if he really was approaching, he must be received with due respect: but, if envy or malice sought to disturb the approaching happiness of Lord Raymond by false intelligence, his power was great, and his resentment would be violent. By his directions, they were for a short time to be strictly guarded, lest they should alarm the minds of his friends by rumours which might possibly prove groundless; if otherwise, a few days would release them.'—They gazed upon each other with surprise, but it was in vain to expostulate; they

they appealed to time to confirm the truth of their declarations: and Grey then proceeded to summon some of the boldest and most zealous of the attendants on Raymond, who were conducted to their Lord, and by him commanded to receive their orders from his favourite, and implicitly to follow his direction.

These commands Grey pretended to explain more fully. He told them, that, from advices lately received, their Lord had good reason to apprehend a false design to drive him from those possessions, which he so justly claimed, and from whence alone he hoped to derive the power of rewarding his faithful followers; that they were to arm themselves with speed, and carefully to guard all the approaches to the castle, against force or treachery. Nor were they slow to express their zeal and chearful obedience. And now this wicked minion stood prepared at the head of a resolute and well appointed band, to oppose the entrance of Lord William, and to plunge a dagger in his heart.

Long they waited in anxious expectation of their invaders, but in vain; no invaders appeared, no danger threatened them. Grey began indeed to hope that these strangers had been employed to deceive them, and to raise these false alarms for some purpose yet undiscovered; perhaps by some friends of the Countess, who had learned or suspected her present condition. He visited the messengers frequently, insulted them on the appearance of falsehood which their intelligence now seemed to wear; menaced, and endeavoured to terrify them into a confession of the real purpose of their coming. They steadily adhered to their former declarations, and related such circumstances of the fortunes, the dangers, and the arrival of Lord William on the coast of England, as but too plainly demonstrated their truth and integrity. Grey was convinced, but dissembled his conviction. He waited impatiently for the approach of the Earl, but no intelligence could be received: no unusual appearance, no arrival of strange and unexpected visitants, had

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had broke in upon the silence and tranquillity of the adjacent lands. The disappointment served but the more to perplex and alarm him: his vigilance was not relaxed; he kept his force collected about him, and still stood resolved to meet his danger, and confirmed in his bloody purpose.

End of Book IV.



BOOK

B O O K V.

S E C T. I.

THE three faithful followers of Earl WILLIAM who had determined to return to their Lord, found him just issuing forth from the hall of Randolph, at the head of a small body of attendants. At sight of them his mind was filled with sad presages. He turned upon his ancient friend with surprise: then both rushed forward, impatient to learn the cause of this unexpected return; and instantly received the melancholy tidings, that whilst their companions had brought the news of the Earl's arrival to the castle of Salisbury, they had returned to acquaint him, that the Countess had given her hand to Raymond, and that his nuptials had been solemnized on the very day of their approach.

The bitterness of this intelligence was too great even for the great soul of WILLIAM. He sunk into a silent disunay, and seemed unwilling or unable to contend with despair. The Knight, whose suspecting thoughts had been prepared for this account, strove to rouse and comfort him, but a long time were his efforts fruitless. The afflicted Lord scarcely forced out, at long and heavy intervals, some broken sighs, some confused and imperfect expressions, of anguish, of resentment, at the supposed unkindness of his wife, and the weakness and unworthiness of her fatal compliance. At length, suddenly starting from this extreme of depression to that of the most violent fury, he uttered dreadful denunciations of vengeance against the destroyer of his peace, and called on his friends to attend him instantly to his castle, and to assist him in a brave and just revenge. But here the caution of the

old Knight interposed, and with difficulty prevailed on him to return to his friendly roof, and there to consult maturely upon the most prudent measures. The Earl obeyed, yet seemed intent only on the most violent and daring course. In vain did Randolph remind him of the insufficient numbers of his retinue, and the superior advantages of the usurper. The storm of passion was still loud and terrible; nor could the Earl listen to danger or difficulty: the injuries which his honour had sustained were the sole object of his thoughts, and revenge his sole purpose.

The fair Jacqueline soon perceived a confusion and disorder arising from some unexpected incident; and, impatient to learn the cause, appeared before her host and her protector. Randolph accosted and entreated her to unite her gentle persuasion, and to prevent Lord William from rushing precipitately on ruin. 'No!' cried the Earl, hastily interrupting him, 'the attempt is not rash, nor the purpose desperate. What tho' my wife hath so soon forgotten me? What tho' the absence of a few months was too great for her impatience? What tho' she hath accepted a second husband? Have my numerous dependents too been false? Have they forgotten me? No! let us collect them! let us fire their brave spirits to revenge their injured Lord; and let his fury fall with its due force upon this adulterous pair.' — Jacqueline seemed lost in confusion: Randolph again interposed, and urged the danger of venturing, thus weakly attended, to seek his vassals, and openly to give defiance to Raymond. But now the noble maid recovered from her first surprise, and her great soul began to beam forth thro' all her virgin reserve. 'Where is that power and influence,' said she, 'in the court of England, which Lord William boasted? If his own wrongs cannot there find redress, if he must have recourse to the precarious chance of arms, in vain have I sought relief in this strange land; in vain have I indulged the pleasing hopes of regaining my lost inheritance, and (if he still supports the miseries of oppression) my injured parent. Will not the king protect. —

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‘ He shall give me justice, cried William. ‘ This arm raised him to the throne: this arm can tear him from it.’ Then embracing her with a paternal fondness, ‘ The spirit of thy brave father, ‘ said he, ‘ dwells in thee. Yes, fair partner of my fortunes, the King shall give me justice. Let my wife, no, the wife of Raymond now, enjoy for a while her soul disloyalty. My vengeance shall be first directed against the great author of my wrongs, the proud Hubert. In the face of his misguided Sovereign, before the gallant Nobles of England, will I proclaim his baseness, and demand full redress. Let us hasten to the royal presence: there shall my friends croud round me, and my vassals attend my orders.’

Randolph was pleased at this resolution, which William considered as the most honourable, but he as the safest course. The time, the manner, and all the circumstances of their departure were now settled with more temper and composed deliberation. The Knight insisted to accompany his noble friend, together with his band of followers: Jacqueline consented still to reside in Cornwall, until the Earl had obtained, first, the full redress of his own injuries, and, then, the happy means of rescuing her father, or of revenging his fate. The little troop was soon prepared to enter on their march, and soon took their way with no ungallant show. The mind of Lord William was still gloomy and disordered. He thought on his wife: the tenderness of her former love, the noble nature which all her actions had invariably displayed, recurred to his mind, but now served only to aggravate his despair. Her strange and precipitate compliance with the desires of Raymond was perplexing: but to be so soon forgotten was tormenting: and ever and anon he unbosomed his distracted thoughts to the friendly Knight.

‘ Foolish and wretched is the man’ (thus would he exclaim) ‘ who builds his happiness on the frail and instable affection of woman. O my friend! how securely did I conceive our loves to have been found-

'ed! how firmly did her heart seem linked to mine:
 ' Can I forget the time, when all the noble youth of
 ' England courted the smiles of the rich and beautiful
 ' heiress of Earl Patrick, when her eyes marked me
 ' out as their most worthy object, and her love graced
 ' my rising fame? Can I forget the day when I was
 ' first, publickly distinguished by her favour? The so-
 ' lemn jousts were prepared: the Knights glittered
 ' in their pompous array: we were surrounded with
 ' all the beauties of the land; but our thoughts and
 ' desires were fixed on Ela. How did I labour to
 ' engage her intention by my gorgeous entry? Well
 ' do I remember the device which then adorned my
 ' shield, and which my youthful pride had dictated.
 ' It was an eagle towering in air, with his eyes fixed
 ' on the sun; and these words beneath; NOT AR-
 ' ROGANT BUT CONSCIOUS OF NOBLENESSE. We
 ' traversed the lists in solemn state; and each champi-
 ' on, as he passed, made low obeisance towards the
 ' place where Ela sat; but each unnoticed, 'till, Wil-
 ' liam pacing proudly by, and paying the just homage
 ' to her high beauty, suddenly she let fall the knot
 ' of ribbons which adorned her lovely arm. I seized,
 ' kissed, and fixed it in my crest: and on that day did
 ' my gallant deeds confess my zeal to merit her high
 ' regards. Many a spear was bravely shivered: but,
 ' ere our appointed courses were finished, a loud and
 ' sudden shriek assailed our affrighted ears: we turned
 ' and saw the scaffold, where this fair dame was seat-
 ' ed yielding to its load. I burst like lightning to her
 ' rescue; and, amidst all the officious and vigorous in-
 ' terposition of the croud, which the dangerous in-
 ' cident had collected, this arm it was which saved
 ' her.—And did our loves decrease? Was my heart
 ' ever estranged? Was it one moment seduced to any
 ' other object?—And, yet, so soon to be forgotten!
 ' the false tidings of my death so eagerly received!'

Randolph was studious to divert him from this me-
 lancholy subject. Revenge, he knew, was grateful to
 the high soul of William; and he laboured to inspire
 him with hopes of a brave revenge. He spoke of

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the arts that had been used to influence the weakness of widowed, unfriended, unassisted woman; of the craft of Hubert, and his iniquitous abuse of the royal favour. 'But now,' said he, 'the King shall know this minion: he shall know with what malicious purpose of oppression and injustice his false heart conceived, and his false tongue uttered the lying tale of Earl William's death; and speedily shall he execute the full vengeance due to the wounded honour of his brave kinsman.' — With eyes darting indignation, and sounds of disdain, the Earl replied, that his own influence and reputation in England, his noble friends and numerous adherents, had made Kings; and that he relied on these much more than on the justice of young Harry. 'Alas' said he, 'little can thy honest heart conceive of that craft and wily insinuation with which this courtier hath wound himself to the heart of his easy Prince. He alone directs and commands him. The noblest spirits of England are insolently scorned; and the remotest corner of the realm feels his pernicious influence.' 'Good heaven,' cried Randolph (still labouring to divert the Earl from the gloomy subject which lay deeply fixed in his mind, and was ever ready to rise and torment him) 'When shall our distracted country feel the blessings of a wise and virtuous rule? shall faction and tumult for ever disturb the land, and forbid avarice and slavish adulation for ever surround the throne? Is the insolence of ill-gotten power to know no controul? Sad and gloomy is the prospect! — And yet, the spirits of my brave countrymen, tho' depressed and overborne, are still unbroken. They have already contended, and they may again contend for the great prize of freedom. Perhaps (and truly pleasing it is to indulge that hope) England may yet experience some happy age, when wisdom, and valour, and virtue shall conspire to bless and to exalt her. Some glorious Monarch may yet hold her imperial sceptre, flourishing in all the pride of youth, loved and revered by his grateful people, and dreaded by the enemies of justice

‘ and his kingdom. Perhaps the pious care of some
 ‘ illustrious parent may have formed his mind to all
 ‘ princely virtues; perhaps some noble friend of ex-
 ‘alted merit and unsullied integrity may have aided
 ‘ the glorious work. Wisdom and justice may guide
 ‘ his councils, and valour lead forth his victorious
 ‘ armies: the united voice of a happy people may
 ‘ bless him, and the united force of all his enemies
 ‘ may sink before him. If heaven should be thus
 ‘ gracious to our country, could its transcendent fa-
 ‘vour admit of any accession? — Yes! let the happi-
 ‘ness, diffused from the throne, be reflected back on
 ‘ such a Monarch. Let him be amply rewarded, in
 ‘ a princely consort, fitted to grace his royal seat,
 ‘ and relieve his generous cares. — Then let the
 ‘ ardent prayers of his people be accepted. Let the
 ‘ princely pair flourish, and very late pay the debt of
 ‘ nature: from heir to heir let their virtues be trans-
 ‘ mitted; and immortal be the glories and blessings
 ‘ of their reign!’

The spirit of the good Knight was elevated and in-
 flamed by this idea of public felicity, the most exalted
 and compleat which his imagination could form: and
 William seemed to forget his private grief, and to be
 wrapt in the same pleasing dream. And now they ap-
 proached towards the city of Marlborough where
 Henry still held his court. The distant view of this
 royal seat raised a violent agitation in the breast of
 Salisbury. He was now on the point of breaking
 from his obscurity, and once more shining forth in his
 native sphere: and he felt all the emotion of an high
 and noble mind, impatient of wrongs, ready to urge
 them boldly and resolutely to seek redress. He enter-
 ed the city, when suddenly his spirit was still farther
 agitated by a strange and unexpected encounter. A
 small, but gallant, troop approached him, headed by
 a youth of noble port. Their leader had already fixed
 his eyes upon him, with marks of wonder; and, stop-
 ping, as if deprived of all power of motion, pronounced
 the name of Salisbury. William came forward with
 courteous demeanour, attentively surveying the stran-
 ger,

ger, who at once ended his suspense, yet encreased his wonder, by declaring himself the young Lord of Poitiers, that Chauvigny whom his generosity had restored to an injurious father. A sudden exclamation of surprize burst from the Earl, and an interval of silence ensued: at length he was enabled to exclaim — ‘ Good heavens! the son of the oppressor and murderer of my friend: — And in England! — The father too, perhaps, is ready to insult our wrongs, and boast of his perfidious cruelty.’ — With his ashes’ replied the youth, ‘ let his errors also lie buried, Dost thou love the good Les Roches? He is my friend and father: extend thy love to me, and say, bless me with the happy tidings, that the fair Jacqueline hath escaped the storm of contention and misfortune, and lives in safety.’ — Would to heaven!’ cried the Earl, ‘ that her father were now in England, to embrace and bless her; to be witness of her noble nature, and to thank the saints for her preservation.’ — The young Lord could no longer restrain his impatient ardour; they had both alighted, and he now rushed on Earl William, and clung round his neck, with all the extravagance of joy. ‘ What tho,’ said he, ‘ the brave Les Roches be still pursued by the severity of fortune; he may be rescued; he may be yet restored to honour and happiness. Lord William will not deny his assistance; he will aid me with his power, whilst I labour to restore him! — Now,’ cried the Earl, ‘ I am indeed thy friend. — But we are at the English court. Here must I make a trial of my power. If the name of Salisbury be not forgotten; if a few months of obscurity have not totally effaced the remembrance of my birth, my actions, and my services, I shall yet obtain redress of my private wrongs; and, if he still survives, I shall relieve my friend.

Thus saying, he rushed forward, with an aspect of fiery resentment and indignation. Chauvigny turned back with his followers, and attended him, expecting some important discovery, some explanation of what the Earl had hastily and obscurely hinted. They soon

reached the very centre of greatness and magnificence; and, now, the long lost Earl of Salisbury once more appeared in becoming state amidst the nobles of England, shining like the great light of heaven when just emerged from a dark and baleful eclipse. His ancient friends embraced him; his peers crowded round him, impatient to learn the story of his wonderful deliverance. Not so the crafty Hubert; he heard of his arrival with terror, and beheld him with confusion and dismay. The young king hastened to congratulate his noble kinsman, who sunk upon his knee, loudly calling for justice and redress. Henry raised him, and demanded the cause and purpose of his petition. The Earl collected his great spirit, and, with looks of terror and disdain, pointed to Hubert, whilst silence and suspense possessed the croud of nobles. ‘Come forth,’ said he, ‘thou wicked author of my wrongs! come forth, and meet the vengeance due to thy treachery.—— Here stands the wretched caitiff, (such this arm shall prove him) who basely seized the fatal moment of my absence to destroy my peace and happiness for ever. Bear witness for me, ye warlike Barons and Nobles of this land, with what zealous loyalty I laboured to support the cause of Henry, and to establish our rightful King on that royal seat: for him and for our country have I encountered the toils and desperate calamities of war, the fury of proud foes and formidable hosts, the rage of storms and waves, and the dangers of the tempestuous ocean. Scarcely have these shattered limbs supported the painful task of honour, and wonderful hath my deliverance been. And what is my recompence? Whilst I fought in Gascoigne, this pernicious courtier, who never experienced the hazards and distresses of the field, never knew aught but the luxurious ease of a palace, contrived the ruin of the brave harrassed soldier. He chose out his minion, his nephew, the unworthily-ennobled Raymond: he filled the royal ears with false and malicious tales of my death; he sent his creature to seize my castle, my power,

and

‘ and my extended domain; and to insult my unhappy Countess with his adulterous love: he hath abused her weakness; he hath deceived her credulity, or perhaps by force possessed himself of her bed. I seek not for reparation: my wrongs will not admit of this; but I call for just punishment, for vengeance due to that deadly wound my honour hath thus sustained. To the justice of my liege Lord I fly, — to your royal justice, rather than to the influence which Salisbury still maintains, and the power which he still commands in England.’

Henry was embarrassed and disordered by the boldness of this address. The precipitation with which he had yielded to the desires of Hubert now appeared in the true light, and covered him with confusion. He prepared to accost the Earl in such soothing terms, as he could command in this disorder of his thoughts, when the favourite, versed in all the refined arts of dissimulation, hastily prevented him, and thus assumed the semblance of a generous impatience of all censure or suspicion:

‘ That I rejoice at the happy arrival of Earl William, the saints are witnesses: that I believed him dead surely cannot be deemed a crime, when such repeated assurances were received, that he had shared the fate of his unhappy countrymen. What though I too indulgently consented to the wishes of my nephew, and obtained him permission to woo the gentle Countess, whom all the land regarded as a widow? What force, what fraud, what injury was meditated? What injustice hath been committed? What vile dishonest purposes have been pursued, that vengeance is so loudly denounced? The soul of Raymond is noble, and his procedure hath been honourable. True, he sought the Countess; he found her deep in sorrow; he indulged her sorrow; nor urged his passion with the importunity of violent love. He waited, if, happily, time and his tender cares might move the Countess to listen to his suit; but, thanks to the interposing providence of heaven, his suit could not prevail. — Go, Lord

‘ William, repair to thy princely castle: there thy wife waits to receive thee; there shalt thou find her unassailed and unpolluted. Go, and be happy; and, when thou reflectest on thine own credulity, learn to forgive those who too easily received the false story of thy death.’

The Earl gazed in silence, doubting, yet willing to believe these happy tidings. Hubert repeated his assurances with an aspect steady and composed. By ‘ my Holidame!’ exclaimed the King, ‘ it rejoiceth us that Lord William hath now found his suspicions false: not the unexpected deliverance and happy arrival of our noble cousin give us greater joy. But let us forget all jealousies, and depise all false rumours.—Embrace, and forgive Lord Hubert, command our power, and enjoy the reward of thy gallant toils.’—The courtiers echoed the sentiments of their prince, and William with a constrained submission gave his hand to Hubert: his noble friends were collected round him, and renewed their congratulations: the King by his caresses seemed willing to efface the remembrance of that easiness with which he had yielded to the desires of his favourite, and this favourite, by an assumed affection and humbleness of deportment, sought to quench all remains of animosity in the mind of the injured Earl; but conscious, of his own artifice and hypocrisy, he naturally suspected that readiness of belief, with which Salisbury seemed to yield his declarations, as well as that sudden calm of peace and reconciliation, in which his fury seemed to subside. He had injured, and therefore hated him: he had affirmed boldly to divert the present storm; but, whether the Countess had already yielded to Raymond, or whether he had forcibly possessed himself of her bed, as yet he knew not: and possibly Lord William might detect his falshood, and return with double fury, to urge his wrongs, and seek his just vengeance. Such thoughts he revolved for a while in his busy mind; and then confirmed himself in the dreadful purpose of concealing his baseness, and providing effectually

effectually for his safety and power by the immediate destruction of this Lord.

Far other thoughts now employed the Earl. He had by slow degrees, and by the repeated arts of refined and steady hypocrisy, been wrought into a firm persuasion, that Hubert had declared the truth; that his messengers had been deceived; and that his wife still preserved her loyalty: and he freely indulged these delightful thoughts, which naturally inspirited an enlivened joy and complacency. The gracious condescensions of the King he received with just returns of duty; he shared in the delight which his noble friends expressed at their return; and, altho' he wondered, yet was he affected with due pleasure, at the zeal and love which the young Lord of France discovered, at that earnestness of friendship which seemed so kindly interested in his fortunes. But not the splendour and pleasures of a court, not the affection of friends, nor the smiles of royal favour, could detain him in the city of Marlborough. He was impatient to seek his own noble mansion, and his attendants held themselves in readiness to accompany him. Without any delay, but what refreshment necessarily demanded, he took a dutiful leave of the King; he received the repeated assurances of Hubert, that his nephew had already retired from the castle, and that the Countess waited to embrace him with unabated love; and he departed at the head of his little troop, now reinforced by the followers of Lord Chauvigny, who declared his resolution to attend the Earl of Salisbury.

They took their way; and William, who had hitherto been totally engaged by his own great affairs, was now more at ease, and more at leisure to recall the tender sentiments of friendship, and to think on the good Les Roches. 'Gentle Lord,' said he, addressing himself to young Chauvigny, 'how have I deserved this zealous attachment, these extraordinary instances of your affection? Say, what surprising events have brought thee hither? Say, how hath Les Roches merited those tender names, I think
' thou

‘thou gavest him, of friend and father? What of his fortunes canst thou inform me? If he indeed survives, where shall I seek him? How shall I restore his daughter?’—The mention of Jacqueline brightened the countenance of her lover with a momentary joy, which was instantly clouded, and with a sigh which awakened all the fears of William, he exclaimed at the severity with which fortune had pursued his generous friend. ‘I still hope,’ said he, ‘and on that hope rests all my comfort, that he is now in England, but whither driven, or where he may now lay his melancholy head, alas, I know not. It is my purpose to seek him; and in this good purpose Earl William surely must assist me.—Let me unfold the story of our fortunes, and no longer wonder to see Chauvigny in this land.’—They rode slowly on apart from their associates, all but the good old knight; and the Frenchman thus began.

S E C T. II.

‘**H**OW can I reflect on that credulity, with which my father yielded to the false and malicious Representations of Mal-leon, and that unmerited severity with which he pursued our generous friend? Peace and forgiveness to his departed spirit!——If thou hast already heard how the hunted fugitive ranged through the wild and desert mountains, spare me the odious recital: yes, thou must have heard. Thy brave Countrymen, who long defended him, must have at length found their Lord. Their valour only could have rescued thee from the snares of envy and cruelty. And, may due honour and reward attend that Fidelity, which guarded the unhappy devoted head of Les Roches! Long time they watched over him in his melancholy retreat: nor was it their want of vigilance, but his own absence of thought and careless inattention to danger, which at last separated him from their protection.

‘It

It was on the morning of a night of broken and disordered slumbers, that the unhappy Lord started from his hard couch, full of inward grief, and agitation. The woody covert where he had sought repose, at first concealed his motions from the Englishmen, who watched at some distance. Insensibly was he led on, wrapt up in sad and painful reflection; and wandered solitary down the winding path, which led from the mountain, was divided, and gradually lost in a vale incumbered with shrubs and rocks, and watered by a resounding current. At length, he awakened as from a dream, stared round on the awful prospect, and sought to gain his companions. But, alas! he had wandered too far, and too incautiously. Perplexed and confounded, encompassed with steep hills, which the luxuriant hand of nature had clothed with a wild magnificence of forest; and, ever and anon, diverted from his course by the rocky fragments which the torrent seemed to have washed down into the valley; his eyes searched in vain for the path which he had taken: he hastened on, and paused by turns, without direction, nor totally free from terror; when suddenly he descried a venerable personage, clad in the habit of austere piety, on which the silver beard descended from a grave and emaciated visage. The hermit advanced, raising his shrivelled hands in holy benediction over our astonished friend; and, as Les Roches bowed before him, he enquired with surprize what fate or chance had led him into this rude and solitary retreat.

The afflicted Lord, awed by his reverend aspect, yet comforted by that benevolence which beamed forth from his looks, and softened all his accents, freely acknowledged that he was the wretched child of calamity, driven to the desert by persecution and oppression; and that he sought the neighbouring hills, where a few friends, the two sharers in his misfortune, waited his return. The reverend father, who saw his anguish, comforted, exhorted, and

‘ and by degrees so far gained on his confidence, that
‘ he freely acknowledged his name and quality, and
‘ briefly related the events which had driven him
‘ from the society of men. The hermit was moved,
‘ and, pointing to his cell, which lay at no great
‘ distance,’ “ There, said he, shalt thou find re-
‘ fuge, ’till these storms of calamity have wasted their
‘ violence. Come, on, my son, enter and partake
‘ of my homely refreshment: your friends too shall
‘ be my care. Tarry there: I know all the wind-
‘ ings and secret paths of these unfrequented hills;
‘ I shall soon find them: and here shall they enjoy a
‘ more secure, and, perhaps, less uncomfortable re-
‘ treat.” The Baron made obeisance, and accept-
‘ ed the generous invitation. The hermit laboured
‘ up the precipice with slow and painful steps, to-
‘ wards the place which Les Roches had described;
‘ but here he found no unhappy strangers: all was
‘ silence and solitude. He returned full of fears and
‘ sad forebodings, which his tenderness of nature had
‘ dictated. He entered his cave, but this too was
‘ silent and solitary: no guest appeared; no afflicted
‘ Lord waited his arrival.

‘ However cautiously Les Roches had directed his
‘ course, however secret and retired he had chosen
‘ his residence, still had his motions been long watch-
‘ ed by some base and ignoble men, allured by the
‘ rewards promised to those who should discover and
‘ seize him. Four sordid hinds, disguised in the
‘ garb of wood men, had diligently traced him thro’
‘ all his various progress, but still were terrified and
‘ kept at wary distance by the vigilance and well
‘ known valour of his attendants. The moment of
‘ his separation had not escaped them: they exulted,
‘ and resolved to seize this critical occasion. They
‘ pursued his steps, and hastened down to the valley
‘ by different routs to them well known. — They lay
‘ unnoticed, impatient to snatch their prey: they
‘ marked the late conference, and saw the hermit
‘ depart; and no sooner was he lost in the distant
‘ wood, than rushing furiously into the cave, and
‘ drawing

drawing their concealed weapons, they seized the unhappy Lord unprepared for resistance. In vain did he enquire the cause, and endeavour to expostulate: they sternly commanded him to attend their pleasure, and hurrying him precipitately away, directed their course towards the castle of Poitiers, filled with the delightful idea of those rewards they were to receive for a service so important. Their victim attended them, patient and resigned to their insolence, disdaining all entreaties and complaints; and was at length conducted into our hall, as a man indifferent to his fate, and prepared boldly to meet the worst that oppression could inflict.

But here he found a strange and unlooked for reception; and all the sanguine hopes of his sordid hunters were lost in confusion and disgrace. Fortunately some followers of Les Roches, who had been made prisoners, and were examined by my father, distinctly recounted the events in the Isle of Rhè, and fired his brave spirit with indignation and contempt for the Count Mal-leon. He began to lament the precipitate and misguided severity with which he had pursued our friend, and to revere the character of Lord Salisbury. In that moment he received the account of my flight, with true paternal grief and anxiety. His joy at my speedy return was equally extravagant; and soon was he informed of the generosity that restored me to his arms. Alas! these violent and repeated impressions were too great for his weak and disordered frame. He had long been oppressed by a dangerous malady, which, as it had inflamed and irritated his spirit to an unusual degree of impatience and fretful violence, so was it, in return, inflamed and irritated by the events which this violence had produced. Too late did he lament his fatal rashness, and utter his ineffectual wishes to make a full atonement. On the very morning when Les Roches arrived at Poitiers, we were alarmed with the symptoms of his dissolution, and in these arms did he expire.

Too intent on paying the mournful offices of my deceased

' deceased parent, I could scarcely give a thought to
 ' Les Roches; I had just the power to issue my com-
 ' mand that he should be treated nobly. Thus did he
 ' continue for some time a prisoner, unnoticed, and
 ' uncertain of his fate: an interval which we after-
 ' wards lamented bitterly. To that we imputed the
 ' loss of Jacqueline; to that, the distresses of Lord
 ' William; which our imaginations represented in the
 ' most frightful form, all derived from my unhappy
 ' delay in seeking and offering him protection. At
 ' length the remains of Lord Chauvigny were inter-
 ' red with all solemn rites-befitting his exalted condi-
 ' tion. I now became Lord of his power and domain,
 ' and soon found leisure to think on the father of my
 ' beloved Jacqueline. The hinds who had made him
 ' my prisoner, and now applied for their reward, saw
 ' me fall at his feet and embrace him, with all the rap-
 ' ture of affection and reverence. They would gladly
 ' have a merit of preserving and conveying him to my
 ' castle: nor should I have denied their reward, but
 ' that their rude insolence had aggravated the distress-
 ' ses of my friend. I instantly pronounced him free;
 ' I vowed to devote all my influence and power, to
 ' make atonement for his unmerited sufferings; to
 ' exert the most zealous efforts of love and friendship
 ' to regain his daughter and to relieve Lord Salisbury.
 ' But Les Roches was indeed re-instated in full posses-
 ' sion of his lands and castle: but, not all our most
 ' diligent enquiries, not all our vigilance and labour,
 ' in traversing the wildest and most unfrequented parts
 ' of our province, could obtain the least information
 ' of his daughter, or his friend; so secretly had Salis-
 ' bury chosen his retreat: or perhaps he was then con-
 ' tending with storms and waves; perhaps securely
 ' landed on his own native shore. This last thought
 ' was pleasing, and we were inclined to indulge it.—
 ' Thus while my breast was filled with all the impa-
 ' tience of love, and paternal fondness equally predo-
 ' minant in Les Roches, we soon concurred in the
 ' adventurous resolution of seeking the dear treasure
 ' in England, which fortune had so unkindly torn
 ' from

from us. Thither, said we, hath Jacqueline been conducted by her noble protector, and there shall we find both utterly despairing to regain Les Roches. Inflamed with such hopes, we instantly prepared our retinue, a gay and gallant train: we soon reached the coast, and soon were we embarked: alas, too soon! little suspecting the severe reverse of fortune, that now threatened to confound all our flattering expectations. — The sea was rough and stormy, our bark stout and amply furnished, but our mariners were unskilful; and long time did we contend with all the violence of the winds, and long time were we driven from our destined course. And, when at last, after various dangers and difficulties, we were cheered with the hopes of speedily gaining the English coast, suddenly we found ourselves assailed by a bold piratical vessel, and threatened with a severe captivity. The hostile intentions of our adversary were but too plainly discovered, as he bore down upon us. Our force was instantly collected, and we resolved to defend our liberty with due spirit. Tortured at the thought of being prevented from pursuing my design, I raved in all the wildness of frenzy and desperation, which the good Les Roches endeavoured to restrain, himself equally resolute, but inspired with a more deliberate and rational courage. No sooner had the enemy closed with us, than this gallant Lord, earnest to prevent me in the pursuit of danger, leaped on board his vessel, was followed by a few attendants, and there maintained a bloody and unequal conflict. We pressed forward, earnest to second this bold attack; the pirate was alarmed at our numbers and our resolution, when, suddenly, the violence of the surge separated our vessels; and as we endeavoured to regain our former station, anxious for the rescue of our companions, we were shocked with the view of the pirate flying before us. His vessel was of quicker sail, and his mariners more expert. He left us in rage and anguish, uttering fruitless execrations, and straining our limbs in fruitless efforts to regain our captive friends. In the bitterness

' bitterness of grief and disappointment, I resolved
 ' to continue the pursuit, if happily some favourable
 ' incident might bring the enemy once more into our
 ' reach; and for a while the pursuit was continued.
 ' But the storm was loud, and my followers too sensi-
 ' ble of their danger. They forced me to make to-
 ' wards land; and, after much hazard and difficulty,
 ' we were at length disembarked on the southern coast
 ' of England.—We recounted our late adventure to
 ' the inhabitants of the coast, who well knew the pi-
 ' rate we described, and had oftentimes suffered by
 ' his depredations. They informed us that his name
 ' was William de Morisco, a bold adventurer, who
 ' had of late frequently infested their dwellings, and
 ' probably, ere long, might alarm them by another
 ' descent: that his exactions had ever been severe,
 ' but that his nature, rude as it was, discovered no
 ' wanton cruelty, no malicious thirst for blood; that
 ' an honourable ransom might prevail upon him to
 ' set our friends at liberty. I was comforted by this
 ' intelligence, and waited for a time, in hopes of
 ' some favourable opportunity of recovering Les
 ' Roches: but no vessel appeared; no intelligence
 ' was received.

' Unable to support this delay, I resolved once
 ' more to seek the enemy at sea. My followers I
 ' knew would prove averse to such an attempt; and
 ' the occasion demanded more skilful mariners, and
 ' a vessel more compleatly appointed than our's,
 ' which by this time had felt the severity of winds
 ' and seas. I therefore formed the bold design of
 ' applying for assistance directly at the English court.
 ' A young King, jealous of his honour, could not
 ' be unmoved at the insults offered to his territory
 ' by this obscure adventurer: he must readily fa-
 ' vour the generous purpose of pursuing and engage-
 ' ing him: and, if Lord Salisbury hath now regain-
 ' ed his native country, he cannot be less zealous
 ' to rescue his friend; he must effectually aid my
 ' endeavours.—Thus I reasoned; and, leaving a
 ' part of my retinue on the coast to treat for the
 ' ransom

ransom of our friends,' if the pirate should appear, I proceeded to the court of England, where jousts and tournaments were prepared for the entertainment of the King, now recovering from a tedious sickness. In these I engaged; nor was I disgraced, or my attendants unnoticed. Henry vouchsafed his attention to the stranger, and received me with a princely welcome. I called myself a young Lord of one of those provinces of France that acknowledged the English jurisdiction; and declared the whole story of my adventure on the voyage towards England. The King was duly affected with indignation, commended the gallant resolution I expressed of seeking the pirate, and readily promised to entrust the chastisement of this insolent plunderer to my command.

Lord Hubert, whom I soon found to be principal in the confidence of his master, echoed the sentiments of Henry: he frequently held converse with me, and enquired much about the affairs of my province. Discourse of the late wars naturally introduced the name of Salisbury: I sighed, and Hubert hastily demanded if I could say aught of the fortunes of this Lord. The melancholy air which I assumed, redoubled his attention: I told him that Lord William had landed in France, had been pursued by the fury of his unjust enemies, fled with a noble maid whose father had deeply shared in his calamities; and, since he was not by this time returned to his native country, I feared for both. — Hubert, with an impatience and violence to me unaccountable, hastily interrupted me, by declaring that William must have perished; and this was delivered in a tone and manner which indicated too plainly, that he felt a peculiar pleasure in this persuasion. I was alarmed; I cautiously avoided all farther explanation, and coldly assented to his opinion: but Hubert, naturally jealous, and practised in the arts and policy of courts, suspected my silence. He was sensible that I had suppressed some part of my story: he treated
me

‘ me with distance and reserve, and my suit sped
 ‘ but coldly. Frequently did I remind him of the
 ‘ royal promise I had received, and urged him to
 ‘ issue the orders necessary for enabling me to seek
 ‘ the pirate. I was long tortured with delays, ’till,
 ‘ quite wearied out by the insincerity of a minister,
 ‘ who interposed like a baleful cloud between me
 ‘ and the favour of his prince, I sought a convenient
 ‘ hour, and once more kneeled to young Henry. He
 ‘ graciously directed me to repair to the coast with-
 ‘ out farther delay, and at the same time command-
 ‘ ed that a vessel should be there prepared, ready to
 ‘ receive and to acknowledge me commander. I
 ‘ bowed, and kissed the royal hand: I collected my
 ‘ attendants: ——— I met Lord William.’

‘ In a happy hour!’ replied the Earl: — ‘ but,
 ‘ gentle Lord, be not diverted from thy purpose:
 ‘ haste thou to the coast, I shall but visit my castle,
 ‘ and straight follow thee, if happily we may yet
 ‘ recover our noble friend. Jacqueline shall receive us
 ‘ at our joyful return, and thank thee for her father.’

S E C T. III.

CHAUVIGNY prepared to answer, when their
 conference was suddenly interrupted by the ap-
 proach of a stranger, who, with gentle aspect and
 deportment, addressed himself to Salisbury, and kind-
 ly congratulated his safe return to England. The
 Earl beheld him with surprise tempered with due
 courtesy, and, ere he could demand his name, the
 stranger observed with earnestness that the dampy
 shades of night were approaching fast; and pointing
 to a fair dwelling, which lay at some small distance,
 invited the Lords to accept of residence and refresh-
 ment under his roof, ’till morning. ‘ There,’ said he,
 ‘ shall your retinue be also entertained; and there
 ‘ shall Lord William receive some pleasing intelli-
 ‘ gence from the castle of Salisbury.’ Without farther
 hesitation or enquiry, the Earl joyfully accepted
 this

this invitation, and, pressing forward as his host directed, entered a goodly hall, which seemed decked and prepared for his hospitable reception.

Little did this Lord conceive of the danger which now awaited him; of the desperate purposes of Raymond and his associates, and the secret malignity of Hubert who for some time had entertained a design against his life, and hesitated only about the means of execution. Conscious of the vengeance due to his own baseness and falsehood, and firmly determined to prevent it, he revolved many different schemes of destroying Earl William either by force or fraud. In the midst of such bloody thoughts he was surprised by the arrival of a messenger from Lord Raymond, who desired a private conference: Raymond and his wicked minion had for some time been perplexed and confounded. The intelligence of the three English men (whom they still kept under restraint) was clear and explicit: they adhered invariably to their first account, and frequently repeated their declarations with an ingenuous appearance of truth, wondering that their Lord was not yet arrived. On the other hand, Salisbury did not appear; no farther intelligence was received, no discoveries made by those sent out to watch his approach. In this suspense and uncertainty, Raymond, whose mind was too violently agitated to suggest any calm and deliberate counsels, and Grey, whose wiles seemed to be at length exhausted, concurred in the expediency of dispatching an emissary to Lord Hubert, to inform him of their situation, and to desire his direction. Reginhald was appointed for this purpose, and recommended as a person in whom Hubert might confide. The Monk now appeared before him and delivered his letters; (having already received the dreadful intelligence that William was now safe in the town of Marlborough.) The piercing eye of Hubert, long used to scan the countenances of men, and there to read their thoughts, narrowly surveyed the aspect of Reginhald, and formed too just conceptions of his temper and disposition. He enquired particularly into the measures his nephew had

had pursued; and the Monk answered to his questions in such a manner, as admitted Hubert to a thorough knowledge of his wicked heart. Fully persuaded that he now had a proper instrument of his deadly purpose, he dismissed the Monk for a while, and appointed an hour for a second conference.

The dark design he now meditated required still some farther assistance. A man there was at this time attendant on the court, whom the crafty minister had frequently made the agent of his oppression and injustice. He had often times sent him out to harass the land by severe and fraudulent exactions, and had suffered him to be enriched by a share of the spoil. Tyrrel (so was he named) lived but by the favour of Hubert, who reserved him for his wicked purposes; yet might at once take away his life with a fair semblance of public justice, should he at any time rebel against his sovereign pleasure. This man was now summoned before him; and, with a brow of care and anxiety, as if some design of moment possessed his mind, Hubert commanded him instantly to repair to his house, which lay near the road Lord William was to take; to invite this Lord; to entertain him with all hospitable rites; and, in some other matters which should hereafter be explained more fully, to submit entirely to the guidance of a Monk whom he should speedily send to him, and whom he was also to entertain. Tyrrel was alarmed at this mysterious language: he knew the desperate unrelenting spirit of his master, and suspected that some bloody design was now to be executed; and that his house was to be the fatal scene of violence or treachery. He trembled and hesitated, for he was not yet consummate in villainy: but Hubert thundered in his ears the most terrible denunciations of vengeance and utter destruction, should he betray the least reluctance, the smallest defect of zeal and alacrity in executing his orders. Tyrrel bowed before him with a slavish submission, and promised full obedience.

Still he had to practice with Reginhald; but here he expected, and indeed found an easy task. The
Monk

Monk was again summoned to his presence. The distinction and apparent confidence with which he was treated, served to intoxicate his base mind, and to prepare him for some deed of violence or mischief: Hubert artfully commended his fidelity, and promised to reward it, but lamented the danger in which Raymond and all his adherents were now to be involved. Lord William, he observed, must soon reach his castle; the shame of disappointment and the violence of hatred and revenge must soon fall on Raymond; and the zeal of his faithful friends must appear odious and criminal. Then, with well-affected perplexity and terror addressing himself earnestly to the Monk, he desired his sage counsel in this dangerous emergency. Reginhald, with an awkward and abject abasement, declared that he was totally unable to advise, but ready to follow the directions of Lord Hubert with implicit submission. The subtle courtier seized him by the hand, applauded his zeal, and lavished the amplest promises upon him. 'Be bold,' said he, 'and be happy.—There is but one way—Let us prevent the attempts of our common enemy—by destroying him.'—Reginhald took fire at this proposal: he at once freely offered himself to be the agent, and seemed impatient to learn the means of executing a design so suited to a heart that never felt humanity or remorse.

Hubert hastily produced a phial filled with a deadly poison. 'Behold,' said he, 'the sure means of destroying our enemy. Let it be thy care to present Lord William with this fatal draught, and name the reward of so great a service.—And now he proceeded to explain his fell purpose to the Monk more particularly. He dismissed him fully instructed, and impatient for the execution. Reginhald was received by the abject creature of Hubert, and invested with absolute authority over his domestics; Tyrrel watched the approach of Lord William; this Lord accepted his insidious invitation; and the Monk was brought before him, as a person from whom he was to receive some particular intelligence of his Countess. The Earl

Earl was earnest in his enquiries, and Reginhald prompt in his false assurances. He declared (as he had been instructed by Hubert) that he had for some time resided in the castle of Salisbury, employed in administering spiritual consolation to a domestic of the Countess; that he had frequently seen this Lady, been witness of the melancholy of her widowed state, and of the affection with which she cherished the memory of her Lord. A suitor indeed had visited her; but she had obstinately shut her ears against all his solicitations; and Lord Raymond was long since retired in despair.

These studied falsehoods had all the effect for which they were intended. The heart of William was dilated with joy: he embraced his friends with that warmth of affection which sudden good fortune naturally excites: then, turning again to Reginhald, repeated his eager enquiries about his wife, his son, his house; and received such answers as confirmed his joy. He now secretly condemned his own rash suspicions of the Countess; his love was redoubled; he was impatient to receive her in his arms; and all the lively impressions of delight and satisfaction which he felt were communicated to his friends. Chauvigny embraced him in joyful congratulation; Randolph forgot his suspicions, and wore a face of serenity and pleasure. A generous repast was prepared, and the board was graced with the most enlivened social festivity.

The false host knew full well the dreadful purpose now to be executed, and dared not oppose, though he shuddered at the thought of it. To Reginhald he resigned the absolute command of his domestics. The wicked Monk was officiously attentive to oblige Lord Salisbury; eager to promote the joy of the table, but less intent on sharing in this joy, than in providing for the guests. He had now mixed the fatal draught, and saw the poisoned bowl in the hand of an attendant, ready to be delivered to Lord William. He stood unnoticed in a distant part of the hall; his heart panting, his limbs trembling, and his haggard eyes fixed upon the Earl. He saw

him

him receive the bowl; he retired towards the entrance of the hall; he heard him salute his host and his associates; he turned, and saw him raise the poison towards his head. — In that instant he rushed impetuously out, regardless of those who were entering with equal haste; mounted his horse, which stood prepared by his appointment, and in an extravagance of horrid and malignant joy, fled to Lord Raymond with the important news that the Earl of Salisbury was no more.

The joy of Raymond was extravagant. With eyes all on fire, and accents faltering with impatience and emotion, he demanded the particulars of this surprising intelligence; and the shameless and abandoned wickedness of Reginhald scrupled not to declare the whole of his adventures since his late departure from the castle. He was heard with eagerness and anxiety. At the mention of poison Raymond trembled; the blood forsook his cheeks, and his brow bespoke horror and consternation: but Grey laboured to quiet his disordered spirit, by observing, that he had taken no part in the deed; that it was past and irrevocable; that now, he had but to consider how to approve this event to his own advantage, to the interests of his love and fortune. The wretch who hath once deviated from the paths of goodness, is easily reconciled to the horrors of his progress in iniquity. The thoughts of this Lord were soon turned to the flattering prospects of happiness which were presented to his imagination: his first emotions of joy and triumph returned; he commended the zeal and daring spirit of Reginhald; and Grey joined in the applause, although his wicked heart secretly repined at the share which his brother might now boast, in advancing the designs of Lord Raymond; and envied the vast rewards which his services might justly claim.

Raymond was now fully persuaded that all his wishes were speedily to be crowned with success; that future difficulties would gradually vanish. In his present state of exultation he forgot the obstinacy

with which the Countess had hitherto opposed his desires, and flattered himself with the hopes that a little time, together with a full and clear assurance of the death of Salisbury, would prevail on her to listen more favourably to his suit. For a while he resolved to suspend his solicitations; but, as the prospect of success served to inflame his passion, he obstinately adhered to his resolution of possessing the proud Lady, and even of recurring once more to violence, if violence should be necessary. With an affected lenity and generosity he ordered the three followers of William to be dismissed, when he had first severely reproved them, for presuming to disturb the minds of his friends by false intelligence. They returned towards the house of Randolph, still wondering at the delay of their Lord, and impatient to acquaint him with those important tidings, which the unhappy Oswald had found means of giving them in their confinement, notwithstanding the vigilance of their guards.

Nor did these late extraordinary events, which had engaged all the attention of Raymond and his creatures, fail to excite the wonder and expectation of the Countess. They had suspended her persecution, and now gave her leisure to indulge her hopes of relief and deliverance. Such hopes she had not yet resigned, though tormented by delay and painful disappointment. Some fears indeed sometimes arose, to cloud the pleasing thoughts she was studious to entertain: yet when she reflected how abruptly Raymond had retreated from his wicked purpose of forcibly possessing himself of her bed, under the pretence of a nuptial ceremony; when she considered the appearances of commotion and disorder which were evidently discoverable in the castle; she seemed to have good reasons to persuade herself, that some intelligence must have been received, equally favourable to her, and confounding to her oppressor. She expected every moment to hear of the vigorous and effectual interposition of some friends to assert the rights, and to redeem her from her present captivity; yet

yet did she frequently lament to her faithful attendant, that her rescue was so long delayed. Whatever consolation Elinor could give, was now dissembled and constrained; for Oswald had been enabled to convey to his sister an account of the seizing of young William, and his own return and confinement. She was but too well acquainted with the violence of Eliza, too much alarmed with the dread of her relapsing into her former malady, to entrust this fatal intelligence to her ear. With a heart oppressed with grief and terror, she assumed the aspect of ease and serenity. When the Countess expressed her fears, a sigh sometimes escaped from the attendant; but it seemed the sigh of friendly sympathy; and in her moments of pleasing thoughts, and expectations, Elinor had ever at command some general expressions of comfort, some effusions of pious confidence in the great protector of innocence, to brighten the dawn of hope which arose within her gentle mistress. But she was soon to be undeceived; too soon was her heart to be pierced with the most dreadful didings.

End of Book V.

B O O K VI.

S E C T. I.

THE two brothers who had proved such zealous agents in oppression and cruelty, were once again to aggravate the distresses of the Countess. The discontent and envy which Grey had conceived towards Reginhald since his last arrival, which he was not studious to conceal, together with the insolence and presumption of this Monk, founded on the opinion of his great services, produced mutual coldness and contempt in their wicked hearts, and threatened to dissolve their iniquitous union. A new and unexpected incident now served to light up their animosity.

Some enormities of Reginhald had lately been discovered in the monastery, too great to be concealed or palliated. A country maiden had been seduced to a compliance with his sensual desires. He had for some time consorted with her, until by degrees his brutal passion grew sated, and required some new object. He fixed his lascivious eyes upon the concubine of one of his associates in revelling, and made some attempts to possess her; which had provoked her paramour to utter the most violent menaces against the Monk. To appease his resentment, Reginhald basely proposed to give him up the unhappy victim of his own lewdness. The man was not yet so abandoned to all sense of virtue, as not to feel the utmost abhorrence at this instance of transcendent villany. Less scrupulous to acknowledge his own shame, as he was not of the clerical order, and too violently provoked against the Monk to admit any thought of reconciliation, he only waited to procure such

such proofs as might confirm his information; then seized the moment of Reginhald's absence, produced the wretched woman he had corrupted, as well as her he had attempted, and wounded the ears of the reverend fraternity with a full detection of their wicked brother: the whole cloister was instantly filled with sorrow and indignation. Every instance of outrage and irreverence which he had committed was now recalled to mind, and repeated by every tongue. How often he had disturbed or disgraced their religious house, was now freely told; how often his inoffensive brethren had been exposed to his insolence or malice; how often his beastly revels had been prolonged, until, roused by the matin-bell, he had mixed his debauchery with their early devotions. It was at length resolved to send a deputation to the castle of Salisbury to demand that Reginhald should be sent back to the monastery, there to hear his accusers, and to suffer the punishment due to his accumulated baseness.

The persons entrusted with this commission were now arrived. The Monk was made acquainted with the purpose of their coming, and affected to treat them with defiance and contempt, although he was too conscious of his guilt not to feel the most violent secret emotions of terror. He sought his brother, and demanded his advice and assistance in this emergency. They chose for their private conference a garden belonging to the castle, in which the Countess had chiefly delighted in her happier days, and which she now sometimes visited, to refresh her harassed mind. Grey listened to the story of his brother's danger, with a provoking coldness and insensibility. Reginhald rudely vaunted his important services to Hubert and Raymond, and seemed to expect, as his just right, their full protection in this his present difficulty. Grey at length broke silence by lamenting this fatal discovery, which he industriously represented as in the highest degree dangerous and terrible. The Monk could scarcely restrain his impatience, at the affected air of superiority which his brother as-

fumed, and the insolence of reproof and censure which his words conveyed. Grey, as if still desirous to mortify him to the utmost, continued his discourse by observing with what zeal he had laboured to recommend a man to the notice of Lord Raymond, who, he feared, must now appear, in the general eye, as unworthy of the favour of this Lord, and that he himself must share in his disgrace. — ‘Dog!’ exclaimed the Monk, flying furiously upon his brother, who was alarmed, and retired from his violence, which he endeavoured to allay, by hastily promising his friendly interposition with Lord Raymond. — ‘Thy interposition!’ cried Reginald; ‘Am I to depend on thee, thou caittiff? Is this my reward? Am I to sue thee for the protection of thy great friends? Who was it that saved them and their pernicious minion from disgrace and ruin? Thou, indeed, could’st steal away from sanctuary the infant heir of Salisbury: but this was the daring hand which presented the fatal draught to the father.’ — Here a loud and piercing shriek broke off their discourse. Ela and her kind attendant had taken their seat unnoticed, in an adjoining bower, and heard the last passionate exclamations of the Monk. The emotions of the Countess was too great to be suppressed. The brother started, were confounded, and hastily separated; whilst Elinor fled with frantic speed to summon assistance to her mistress.

She was soon conveyed to her chamber, and laid upon her couch, languid and silent. Elinor hung over her with streaming eyes, and ever and anon entreated her to give vent to her sorrows; but they were too great for utterance. Her eyes indeed were sometimes raised to heaven with all the expression of silent misery, and then, again, gently closed, as if inviting the kind and healing hand of death to cover them in eternal darkness. But no complaints did she breathe, no exclamations of anguish did she utter. At length her frame seemed convulsed, and violently agitated: a torrent of tears poured down her lovely cheeks, and Elinor conceived some hopes that her

great

great soul was now struggling to shake off the intolerable weight of sorrow. But the calm which succeeded was the calm of insensibility: she gazed round her with a vacant eye, and all her nobleness of nature seemed irrecoverably lost in senseless melancholy.

The disorder of her apartment had reached the ears of Raymond, and, in the violence of surprise and anxiety, he once again rushed into her presence.—With all the bitterness of remorse, he viewed the majestic ruins of exalted beauty and greatness, the fatal effect of his lawless passions. His haughty soul melted into pity: he demanded the cause of her disorder, and received from Elinor a distinct account of the horrid discourse to which her unhappy Lady had been witness. All the train of dreadful passions that attend on detected guilt, tore the heart of Raymond with their united tortures. He started, and wildly traversed the chamber: he paused; bent his eyes again upon the Countess: then, turning suddenly from the afflicting object, uttered terrible execrations upon himself and his vile seducers. He fell upon his knees, and addressing himself to Ela, as if she were sensible of his discourse, he passionately vowed to restore her son to her arms, and instantly to abandon her castle.—Again, rising suddenly, and issuing forth with wild precipitation, he called loudly for Grey; who appeared before him trembling, and, to prevent his rage, began with cursing the brutal violence of Reginhald.—‘Bid my Knights prepare,’ said Raymond; ‘let my retinue stand ready before the gates:—we must depart.’—The countenance of his creature expressed surprise and dissatisfaction.—‘No expostulation! none of thy damned arts!—Where hast thou bestowed the son of this unhappy woman? See that he be instantly conveyed back to her castle. Do it, slave, or woe upon thy head! Haste!—answer me not.—Give out my orders for departure.’—Then, once more entering the chamber of the Countess, with all the remorse and anguish of a man at length awakened to a sense of his

his unjust misguided conduct, when it was now too late to be corrected or repaired; he gazed distractedly upon her, and with a deep and dismal groan pronounced a solemn farewell. Then, turning quickly upon Elinor, who wept by his side: 'Speak to her,' said he; 'she disdains, and justly, to hold converse with a villain. Say, that her persecution is now ended. Tell her I know not, I contrived not the murder of her husband. Let her pronounce his doom, and the officious slave that acted the foul deed shall die. Her son lives, and shall yet be happy in her embraces.—Hear me woman! Tell her I am gone: gone, never more to torment the weak unfriended, solitary widow.—Yes! these cheeks are yet lovely; that form still noble. But what of that? For me! for me could Heaven have reserved so rich a treasure? Horrid presumption!'—Elinor kneeled before him, petitioned with all humility for the enlargement of her brother, and that, to assist her in the necessary attendance of the unhappy Countess, he might be ordered to reside for some time in the castle.—'Cursted castle!' cried Raymond; 'cursted be the hour in which I first entered these fatal walls! And for ever cursted be the slaves who forced me, against my better reason, to persevere in cruelty!'

In the midst of this frenzy, he was surprised into some degree of composure by the appearance of a stranger, who forcing his way violently into the apartment, approached towards the Countess, with an air and aspect of affection and reverence. He accosted her, without deigning to cast a look upon Lord Raymond; and soon perceived the wretched state to which she was reduced. 'What!' cried he, 'no ear for joy and comfort! no voice to greet the arrival of an old faithful servant!'—Raymond, advancing with a stern and haughty frown, demanded to know who he was, and what the cause of this bold unmannered intrusion. 'Question thy own base hinds,' said he, 'who dared to forbid my approach.—Nay, let thy weapon rest; I have a sword

‘ sword as keen, and an arm as brave as thine.’
 — Raymond here attempted to summon his attendants. — ‘ Beware, proud Lord,’ continued the stranger; ‘ poor as I am, single as I stand in the midst of thy creatures, I fear not the power of Lord Raymond. The least violence done to this person would be instantly repaid with ten-fold vengeance. If this noble dame hath been reduced to her present state of misery by thee — hear, and tremble. Yes! thou hast cause to tremble: my Lord, my gracious master, the princely Salisbury, approaches, and, before the close of day, shall resume his rightful power and authority within these walls.’
 — Here, Elinor, who had listened in amazement, fell suddenly on her knees, returned thanks to heaven with the most rapturous devotion, and called passionately upon her mistress to hear the joyful tidings; but was answered only by a deep and heart-felt sigh.

The soul of Raymond was harrowed with consternation. He stood speechless and motionless, and suffered the stranger to depart without further question. He found himself on the brow of a precipice, whither he had been fatally misled by the wickedness of his flatterers, and now was prevented from retreating. Justice followed close upon him, and vengeance was ready to push him head-long down. After an hideous pause of dismay, he rushed out, and once more called furiously for Grey: but Grey had heard the fatal intelligence, and hid himself from the fury of his Lord, which echoed loudly through the halls. The attendants were collected round him, whom he ordered instantly to prepare for their departure, and to retire from this accursed place. He loudly and frequently cried out, ‘ To horse!’ still ranging madly through the castle in search of Grey. In this state of distraction he chanced to espy the Monk, who trembled and shrunk from him, in abject terror. ‘ Traitor!’ cried Raymond, seizing him by the throat, ‘ thy falsehood hath done this. Thou hast listened to my enemies, and

' been their agent to abuse me by thy falsehoods, to deceive and destroy me: but thou at least shalt feel my vengeance.' Reginhald fell at his feet, and would have expostulated; but the storm in the breast of Raymond was too violent to be allayed by his submissions. The unhappy Lord, fully persuaded that the Monk had purposedly framed a tale to lull him into false security, called to his followers, and commanded them to hang up the traitor. — ' There,' said he, sternly, repeating his command, and pointing to a large oak which stood in view, near the castle walls; ' there let me see my sentence executed without delay.' And without delay did they proceed to execute this dreadful sentence. The wicked Reginhald, condemned by the man for whom he had proceeded to such enormous guilt, was led away, in vain imploring mercy, urging the unmerited severity of his fate, and gnashing his teeth in rage and despair. Grey, from his place of concealment, was terrified with the view of his brother in the agonies of death, and tortured with the fear of becoming the next victim to the distracted violence of Raymond.

S E C T. II.

THE dreadful intelligence, now received, was speedily and fatally confirmed to these wicked intruders. Heaven had graciously watched over the Earl of Salisbury, and, with a wonderful hand, rescued him from the brink of destruction. Just in that moment when the cup, poisoned by the Monk, had reached and wet his lips, a sudden exclamation from Chauvigny surprised and discomposed him. He started and withdrew the fatal draught. The noise was loud in the hall, and the crowd increased: his eyes quickly encountered Les Roches rushing eagerly forward: the cup fell from his hand, and he prest on with equal ardor to meet the embraces of his long-lost friend. They clung together in that tumult of joy

joy which knows no words: and, when at length Les Roches found leisure to turn to Chauvigny, the gentle youth, pressing him earnestly in his arms, compleated his happiness, by exclaiming, that Jacqueline too was safe. Nature was exhausted by these violent emotions, and Les Roches sunk down upon a seat, breathless and silent. Again recovering, he cast his eyes round, and survey'd the well-known countenances of his followers and associates, the attendants of Chauvigny, and some of the brave soldiers of Lord William. He started up, and pressed the hands of each: then again, turning to his two noble friends, again he gazed upon them with eager joy, and again they renewed their embraces. 'Now,' said the Earl, 'I shall indeed return home in triumph: now are all my toils, my terrors and dangers, amply recompensed.' Then, resuming his seat at the table, he invited Les Roches to share in their repast, and to allow some indulgence and refreshment to his fatigue. — 'And hast thou, indeed, preserved my daughter?' cried the Frenchman. 'Let me see her! let her father take the dear treasure to his arms! Is she well? Is she at hand?' — 'Safely bestowed under the hospitable roof of this good Knight,' replied William, and pointed to Randolph. 'The noble maid shall straight be summoned to meet thee, and soon shall she share thy joy.' — 'Thanks to the eternal goodness!' replied Les Roches, 'that goodness which hath been pleased to unite us to each other by mutual and repeated offices of friendship. Lo! for my daughter, I present thee with a gift as precious.' Then beckoning to one of his followers, who had entered with him, the man retired, and soon returned, leading young William in his hand, who flew to his father with tears of infant joy. The astonishment of the Earl could scarcely allow him leisure to return the fond endearments of his son. He looked wildly on his friend, and seemed to demand an explanation of this wonder. 'Yes,' said Les Roches, 'thou dost embrace thy son, rescued from danger, perhaps

perhaps from destruction.—But be calm. Thou shall be satisfied. Hear then the story of my fortunes, since I was last separated from thee, my dearest Chauvigny. A few words will relate it all.’

‘Thou hast already heard (Lord William) how much I am indebted to this noble youth. He hath informed thee, no doubt, of our preparations for seeking thee in England, and of our adventure with the pirate who attempted to seize our vessel; little suspecting that strength and desperate resolution which soon taught him to consult his safety by a precipitate flight. Just in that instant when the swelling waters had separated our ships, and our enemies were crowding their sails, to escape from that force which they had rashly provoked, their captain had been borne down by the press, and lay at the feet of one of our brave followers, whose sword was now ready to descend with fury upon his head. But I stopped his arm; and, perceiving our situation, that we were unseconded, and now surrounded by our enemies, I deemed it madness to provoke them by any farther resistance. I yielded myself a prisoner; and the few who had leaped on board with me, soon followed my example. At first, the attention of our enemies was wholly engaged on securing their escape. When they had left our vessel at sufficient distance, their captain accosted me, and, with a gloomy courtesy, thanked me for rescuing him from his danger. I answered, that, as he had experienced our valour, and, when we still might have sold our liberties at a dearer rate, we had declined the effusion of blood, I hoped he would treat us nobly. He demanded to know who we were, and what our purpose. He had taken us, he said, for merchants; that, as he approached, our numbers and appearance had alarmed his people; but, as we had made every attempt in our power to avoid him, he was encouraged to persevere in his design of attacking us: that he himself lived by plunder, and he suspected, that we were engaged in the same pursuit.——

‘ If

If so we might unite our force with his, and share his fortunes.

‘ To convince him of his mistake, I informed him freely of my country, my condition, and my destination, earnestly conjuring him to restore me to my companions, and promising the most ample rewards for a service so important. “ Let me once regain my countrymen,” said I, “ and they shall enrich thee with such a ransom, as shall exceed thy wishes.” But not all my promises could prevail upon the pirate again to seek our ship. He had experienced our force, and dreaded a severe revenge for his attempt. Yet my repeated solicitations at length so far prevailed, that, after some time incessantly roving in search of prey, he proposed to keep three of my companions and myself on board, to land the rest, with a small number of his own men, on the coast of England, (as it was probable our friends had sought this coast) and that, if they could regain them and send back the stipulated ransom, I should then be free. I gladly embraced this proposal. The pirate steered towards the land: the coast was alarmed at the sight of his vessel: but to prevent all opposition, we chose the dead hour of night, and sent off our men in a boat, which brought them unnoticed to shore. They travelled for some time, ere they had the good fortune to find those of our attendants whom Lord Chauvigny had left to treat for my liberty. At length, however, they were found; and the men returned, unmolested, with my ransom. To this I added a rich jewel taken from my finger, which I presented to the pirate, in acknowledgement of my gratitude.

‘ I now hastened to join my friends, and from them I learned that Lord Chauvigny had proceeded to the city of Marlborough. I was earnest to follow him, but my fatigues demanded some refreshment. I was conducted to the house of an inhabitant of the coast, who received me with all hospitable kindness. — Let us unite in adoring the invi-
sible

‘ fible power that directed my steps thither! — The
‘ friendly repast was prepared for me; nor were my
‘ followers neglected. I was pleased at the honest un-
‘ designing affection of my host, and taught to revere
‘ the generous people amongst whom fortune had
‘ now placed me. At the hour of rest, I was courte-
‘ ously conducted to my chamber, but my mind had
‘ been too long and too violently agitated to admit
‘ repose. I revolved the dangers and distresses I had
‘ experienced: I thought of the great purpose for
‘ which I had visited this country: I thought of my
‘ daughter and my friend: I sometimes indulged my
‘ hopes of finding them, and, again, checked and
‘ condemned these flattering imaginations. Thus
‘ did I pass the weary night, ’till roused by a voice
‘ in the adjacent chamber. I listened attentively, and
‘ heard my host in earnest conference with his wife.
“ I like not,” said he, “ this message from the castle
“ of Salisbury.” — ‘ I started at the name, and re-
‘ doubled my attention. — “ This boy is to be care-
“ fully guarded and concealed. But wherefore?
“ Lord Raymond is to wed the widow of the Earl.
“ Why then this concealment, unless he purposes to
“ destroy the young heir? I know the soul of Grey;
“ and though he be my brother, our souls are not
“ allied. I dread his temper. Nature formed him
“ stern and cruel; nor do I doubt but that he may
“ easily be wrought upon to act a deed of blood. But
“ shall my humble dwelling be made the scene of
“ murder, of an infant’s murder.” — ‘ His wife here
‘ began to chide his jealous fears; but they seemed
‘ to have taken too deep root in his mind to be easily
‘ removed. “ What, tho’ my house should not be
“ made the place of execution?” said this good man;
“ What, though they should not proceed to the ut-
“ most pitch of cruelty? Their purpose cannot be
“ honest, and I am made their accomplice by con-
“ cealing him.” — I had heard enough; and now
‘ I busily revolved this alarming discourse.

“ It was evident that the son of my preserver was
‘ exposed to danger — perhaps abandoned by his

“ widow —

" widow — (pardon me, Lord William, if my sus-
 " picion was rash and ungentle) — certainly conceal-
 " ed for some mysterious purpose. A stranger seemed
 " to pity and to fear for him; What then became a
 " friend? What was the part of Les Roches? Were
 " his father still alive, Heaven hath now enabled me
 " to restore him to his arms: but, if he really hath
 " perished, surely it must be my care to protect and
 " cherish this boy, to form the unhappy orphan to
 " honour and virtue, to make him worthy of his il-
 " lustrious descent, and enable him, in due time, to
 " assert his native rights." — Thus I reasoned; and,
 " rising with the early dawn, summoned my follow-
 " ers, communicated this important discovery, and
 " desired their counsel and assistance. They readily
 " concurred in the design of rescuing the young Lord
 " from his present danger. By their advice I waited
 " the appearance of our host. I accosted him gently,
 " and led him on to discourse of his situation, his
 " condition, his friends and his country. He an-
 " swered me without reserve, 'till I at length menti-
 " oned the name of Earl William, and asked if he
 " could inform me of the fortunes of this Lord, and
 " his noble house. He started, and answered, hesi-
 " tating and confused. I at once sternly told him, I
 " was no stranger to the designs formed against the
 " young heir of that house: that, as I had been a
 " friend to the father, I resolved to be a protector to
 " the son, who, I knew, was concealed under this
 " roof. If he would consent to give him up peaceably
 " into my hands, the service should be duly reward-
 " ed; if not—I had force sufficient to rescue him from
 " danger. The man trembled, and, without delay,
 " resigned his charge into my hands.—And now was
 " my mind possessed with new fears and scruples.
 " Methought I had been too rash. A mother's ten-
 " derness, perhaps, hath concealed this Boy, and for
 " a weighty cause, no doubt. How then shall the
 " news of this violent removal afflict her soul? What
 " terrors must she feel? Yet, still, upon mature
 " reflection, I deemed it the safest course to convey
 " this

‘ this youth to Marlborough, where I hoped to gain
 ‘ such intelligence as might direct my future conduct.
 ‘ Thither we bent our course; and, near this place,
 ‘ did I receive those joyful tidings, which brought
 ‘ me to deliver up my dear charge into his father’s
 ‘ care.’

“ From my soul I thank thee,” replied the Earl.—
 “ Yet hath thy tale renewed some doubts and suspi-
 “ cions—but let suspicions sleep till to-morrow.”
 Then, starting up earnestly, he asked with a loud voice,
 “ Who of my brave followers will undertake the
 “ charge of repairing instantly to Cornwall, bearing to
 “ the fair Jacqueline the chearing news of her father’s
 “ arrival, and conveying her to my castle?” Fitz-
 alan stood forth, and with five more who defied toil
 and fatigue, insisted that this pleasing charge should
 be intrusted to them. They departed, each fresh
 and vigorous, as the sturdy hind that rises to his
 morning labours. And now Lord William, turning
 kindly towards Les Roches, attempted once more
 to speak his joy and gratitude. But suddenly his
 voice failed, his cheeks grew pale, a cold dew issued
 from his pores, his whole frame was disordered, and
 he sunk faintly down. The guests arose in confusion
 and amazement. Tyrrel trembled in an agony of
 terror, nor was his consternation unobserved.——
 ‘ Treason!’ cried Chauvigny, seizing the false host,
 ‘ and this sword shall revenge it.—But what revenge
 ‘ on thee, thou wretched slave?—Say, Hast thou
 ‘ indeed murdered this noble Lord? Hath thy vile
 ‘ hand dealt him poison? Confess thy villainy, or
 ‘ this moment is thy last.’ The abject Tyrrel had
 fallen on his knees, and now loudly and vehement-
 ly asserted his innocence; but, when terrified by
 the view of instant death, he scrupled not to confess,
 that by the direction of Lord Hubert, he had in-
 vited the Earl to his house, but that he was not
 privy to any deadly purpose; if such had been con-
 certed, the Monk alone was privy, the Monk alone had
 executed it. Reginhald was sought for, but he had
 fled, which confirmed their suspicions, and filled
 the

the hall with grief and dismay. William alone seemed unmoved. He gently pressed the hand of Les Roches: 'my enemies have prevailed,' said he, 'the snares of Hubert have caught me. —' 'Alas! thou knowest him not. — Visit my castle, comfort my wife, and Oh! continue thy kind protection to my son.'

The grief of Lord Chauvigny was outrageous: that of Les Roches had choked his voice. He hung over the languid Earl, in silence and consternation; whilst, on the other hand, the boy clung passionately round the knees of his father. The scene was affecting; and even the rough soldier, to whom death had been long familiar, melted into tears. — 'Poisoned! and by Lord Hubert!' was repeated with sorrow and indignation. The dismal tidings were soon caught by busy tongues, spread abroad, and propagated thro' the land, to aggravate the disgrace the wicked favourite was soon to experience.

His afflicted friends conveyed the Earl to his couch. And now, the good old Randolph, whose venerable face had worn the deepest marks of sorrow, seemed to be suddenly enlivened by a gleam of hope. He paused, appeared earnest to collect his dissipated thoughts, and now looked as a man unexpectedly visited by comfort. The eyes of his friends were fixed upon him, as if demanding an explanation; when, addressing himself hastily to Lord William, he asked of his present state, whether his pain was encreased or his languor more oppressing? He thanked the gentle Knight, and declared, that now he seemed more at ease. — 'Yes,' cried Randolph, 'and soon shall this malady cease, and still shall William live.' — The Frenchmen were astonished, but the Knight confidently repeated his joyful assurances, Experienced and sagacious, and accustomed to survey all objects with more calmness and composure than young Chauvigny, he revolved all the incidents, since their arrival at the house of Tyrrel. He had marked the aspect of the Monk, and from thence had formed
the

the blackest suspicions of his temper and designs. He had marked his officious cares, and obsequious zeal in attending on the Earl. He had marked how, at the first entrance of Les Roches, the cup had dropt from the hands of Salisbury. He recollected, that after this the Monk had not been seen; and justly concluded, that this was the fatal cup which had been prepared for his friend; that the fell purpose of Hubert had been happily defeated by his sudden surprise; and that the poisonous mixture, which, if drunk, must have instantly proved fatal, had now, when but just scarcely tasted, raised a temporary disorder in the frame of William, which nature, still free from deep infection, would soon be able to overcome. These thoughts, which he communicated to his noble companions, were received with joy; and soon were they confirmed by that ease and vigour which the Earl gradually recovered. Tyrrel had been secured, and was now examined at more leisure. His discoveries served to convince them of what was really the truth, that he indeed connived at the base design, but had not been directly an assistant. But he was not an object worthy of noble revenge. Against Lord Hubert was vengeance loudly denounced, and the soul of Salisbury was on fire to inflict the full severity of justice on his treachery and unrelenting malice.

His resentment and indignation were still to be more inflamed. The unhappy Oswald, who had for some time groaned under a severe captivity, at length had found means to make some impression on the heart of his keeper, who kindly consented to relax his hardships. When the messengers of Lord William were confined, he had desired, and was secretly admitted to hold some conference with them. The keeper was witness, with what clearness and ingenuous honesty they entered into the detail of all their fortunes, and declared that their Lord must, ere long, appear to confront his enemies. The man was alarmed: he had heard the story of Oswald, and he heard it now repeated with honest pity and indignation.

indignation. He was persuaded that the power of Lord Raymond was soon to expire; and that he should do an acceptable service to the Earl, by favouring the escape of that man who had been punished for his affection to the Countess. He revolved these thoughts for some time; at length listened to the solicitations of his prisoners, and suffered Oswald to escape. He lay concealed for a while, resolving to take his way cautiously towards Cornwall; but soon learned the important tidings, which, by this time, began to spread through the adjacent country, that the Earl of Salisbury had arrived at Marlborough, and was preparing to return to his castle. He therefore changed his course, and directed his wary steps towards the royal seat. Fortunately, he encountered Fitz-Alan and his companions, who informed him where he might find their noble master. He entered the hall of Tyrrel at midnight, and demanded to be instantly conducted to the Earl. Alarmed at that general sorrow and dismay which dwelt upon every face, he ventured to enquire, and was soon informed of the cause. Alas! said he 'if the malice of his enemies hath reached the Earl, how shall Oswald hope to escape?' Then, sitting down in mournful silence, he passed the heavy hours in all the bitterness of anguish and despair, 'till the dawn of morning.

The friends and vassals of the Earl, who by this time began to collect round their Lord, had scarcely felt the alarm of his danger, when they received the joyful tidings of his recovery. Oswald too was cheered, and again demanded immediate admittance to the Earl. And he was soon admitted, for his appearance and demeanour promised something extraordinary. He kneeled before Lord William, and wept.—'I come,' said he, 'from thy castle. I come to tell thee of thy unhappy Countess.'—The agitation of the Earl grew violent: but he commanded him to proceed, and he heard him with breathless attention; 'till Oswald, who began to relate all the events of the castle of Salisbury, which he had known, proceeded

proceeded without reserve to describe the oppression of Lord Raymond, with an artless and ingenuous freedom. The rage of William was kindled: he started wildly from his seat, and thundered out the most terrible denunciations of vengeance and destruction.—‘So may this arm prosper. So may this good sword do me service in the hour of danger, as I will revenge thee, noble dame! And may I be cursed, and scorned, and vile as thou, thou recreant Lord, if I forget thy treachery and oppression. — But come, my friends! let us away! — O murderous thief! Is it thus thy wolfish nature hath stolen in upon my helpless fold!’ — His friends laboured to recal him to calmness and attention. Oswald proceeded in his tale, and filled the breasts of all his hearers with the most enlivened indignation. He concluded with relating the reception of the messengers, and his own escape, humbly imploring the protection of the Earl against his incensed Lord. ‘May heaven forget me,’ replied William, ‘if I forget thy honesty. But come, my friends! if ever pity softened your breasts, if ever manhood dwelt in your noble hearts, assist me in punishing the injuries of my gentle Countess.’ — Here young William entered, and ran fondly to embrace his father. At sight of him Oswald fell upon his knees, and with an extravagance of pious joy, thanked the gracious powers who had preserved him. The boy turned and acknowledged his former protector. Thus was the truth of all that Oswald had delivered wonderfully confirmed; and William renewed his thanks and promises of favour. The attendants were summoned: every moment brought in more and more of the Earl’s vassals: Les Roches, Chauvigny, and Randolph vied with each other in their expressions of zeal and impatience to redress the injured. All were ready to take their way, and William enjoyed the pleasing thoughts of surprising the base usurpers in the midst of their presumption. But Fitz-Alan had prevented this surprize. He could not suppress his impatient affection for his noble mistress. To de-
light

light her with the first joyful tidings of her Lord's approach, he had turned aside and visited the castle; and there did he raise that confusion which had overwhelmed Lord Raymond, and his wicked creature.

S E C T. III.

BUT whilst the anguish and consternation of Raymond, which arose from shame and remorse, grew every moment more violent; Grey, who was concerned solely for his personal safety, gradually regained some share of recollection, and began to consider of the means to ward off the impending danger from his own head. His chief reliance was on the important service which he conceived to be in his own power, that of discovering the residence of young William, and restoring him to his father. But still farther to encrease his merit, and to atone for past offences, he determined to betray his master, and to give him up, naked and defenceless, into the hands of his enemies. This base resolution once formed, no time was to be lost in executing it: Raymond was preparing to depart; this must be instantly prevented. He flew among his followers and attendants: he represented the danger which now threatened them, in the most alarming colours: he told them, that their Lord had long proceeded in a course of injustice and oppression, which must be revenged with indiscriminate fury on all who had accompanied him: that he now prepared to retire, hoping, that, whilst the injured Earl was taking a bloody vengeance on his innocent followers, he might escape in the confusion: that the only means of providing for their safety, of approving their innocence, and of disarming the resentment of Lord William, was to continue in their present situation, without any appearance of hostile intentions, any purpose of opposing the entrance of the rightful Lord of this castle, and to oblige their leader also to stay
and

and answer for his own actions. To the nobler few he hinted these things with caution, and they received his insinuations with disdain, loudly declaring that they were resolved to live or die with Raymond. To the baser and the greater number he spoke more plainly. To them he scrupled not to declare, that the violent passions of their Lord had disordered his understanding, and asked, with well-affected terror, who could be safe, after the outrageous dealing with his unhappy brother, whose only fault was, that he had served Lord Raymond (alas!) with too blind and too violent a zeal. — They heard him with approbation, and readily consented to submit to his direction, in this dangerous emergency.

The unhappy Raymond was now reduced to the lowest state of human wretchedness; tormented with the consciousness of his own guilt and weakness; unable to repair, or to atone for the mischief he had occasioned; pierced with all the stings of remorse; unable to conceal his disgrace, yet still too great of soul to bear it: helpless and solitary, whilst the arm of vengeance was lifted against him; deserted by his followers, and betrayed by the man whose wicked arts had sunk him into this depth of misery. Grey, on the other hand, seemed to have composed his fears, and to enjoy a short lived triumph. He had collected a party round him, which gave him the command of the castle. His Lord had retired to give his distractions some moments of rest; and his creatures now issued out orders to his associates, to watch his motions, and even to oppose his departure by force.

In the midst of his presumption, he sought Lord Raymond, whom he had but now avoided, with the most abject terror: with an insolent composure he desired him to explain his intentions. — ‘Oh! are you come?’ cried Raymond: — ‘I have commanded my people to prepare for departure. Let us this instant be gone!’ — ‘Whither?’ said Grey. ‘How shall we escape? Whither shall we fly? The powers of Earl William are at hand. — But what of that?’

‘that? His resentment is not directed against us.
 ‘We have not sought to pollute his bed. We have
 ‘not destroyed the repose and happiness of his wife.’
 —His Lord started up in sudden fury, as if pre-
 paring to punish this insolence: But Grey, nothing
 dismayed, bad him compose his passions: they had
 already proved too violent.——‘Alas!’ said he,
 ‘What was the crime of my unhappy brother?—
 ‘Guilty indeed he was, but not to thee, cruel Lord.
 ‘But I will not upbraid thee now.——Those fol-
 ‘lowers, whom Raymond cannot protect, he must
 ‘no longer hope to command.——Nay, my Lord,
 ‘seek not to pass: here thou hast no longer power;
 ‘this chamber must content thee: here must Earl
 ‘William find thee. Answer him as thou mayest.’
 —There only wanted this treacherous insolence,
 to fill up the mighty sum of miseries, under which
 Raymond groaned. He found himself indeed a
 prisoner, guarded by his own people, and in the
 absolute power of his perfidious creature. He stood
 in mute surprise; and Grey was just preparing to
 repeat his insolence, when the noise of horsemen
 called him suddenly forth.

A small troop had been descried at a considerable
 distance, pressing towards the castle, with the most
 violent and precipitate speed. Those of Raymond’s
 attendants, who had refused to unite in the treachery
 of Grey, first espied their approach, and, mounting
 their horses, called for their Lord to stand on his de-
 fence, or bravely to lead them against the enemy
 (for such they deemed them.) But Grey now ap-
 peared, and with a sudden recollection of thought,
 told them, in the name of Raymond, that no resist-
 ance was to be attempted: that their Lord feared not
 nor would oppose these visitors: but that he directed
 his friends to march a mile eastward of the castle,
 and there to expect him. They obeyed; and Grey
 now observed the little troop more distinctly, won-
 dering at the small number, and struck with a sudden
 and instinctive terror, when he discovered Lord Wil-
 liam (whose person he well knew) at the head of this
 company.

company. He gazed earnestly round him, yet still but a few persons only were in view.—‘ By heaven!’ cried Grey, ‘ he comes not with a force to drive us hence, but to make himself our prisoner:’ then hastily ordered his associates to suffer these men to enter unopposed and unmolested, and, instantly afterwards, to shut fast the castle-gates. He cursed his own folly and rashness, which had led him to betray himself to Lord Raymond. He now saw a noble occasion of repairing his fault, and, instead of persevering in his resolution of giving up Raymond into the hands of the Earl, he now deemed it in his power, and judged it the wisest course, to give up the Earl into the hands of his Lord.

S E C T. IV.

WILLIAM had indeed exposed himself to the utmost danger, by his ungoverned violence. He had taken his way at the head of a princely retinue, well appointed, and zealous to vindicate his cause; so that now his port was that of a warlike Baron, marching to assist his King, against some sudden invasion. Part of his powers was directed to advance towards the castle by different approaches, so as to surround it, and prevent the escape of Raymond or his people. He himself, at the head of a chosen band, attended by the two French Nobles, rushed directly forward. But the impetuosity of the Earl soon left his attendants at a distance, all but young Chauvigny and a few others, who with difficulty kept pace with him. They arrived at the castle-gates, without perceiving that they were come unsupported; and William, far from recollecting his danger, rushed on with furious and impatient ardour, till he had reached the apartment of the Countess.

He flew to take her in his arms, and started back in an agony of terror and surprize, at the discovery of her unhappy condition. He called upon her with earnest, yet tender accents; and now nature seemed

to make some efforts to shake off its lethargic weight. The Countess trembled, as at some extraordinary appearance; gazed with a look less vacant, as if the dawn of reason were returning; sighed and wept. — ‘Art thou,’ said the Earl, turning to Elinor, who busily assisted him to support her mistress, ‘Art thou that good matron, whose cares have administered comfort to my wife? — Heaven shall reward thee: and William shall not be unmindful of thy honest affection. But say — conceal not the truth: Whence this sad disorder in her noble mind? Hath not her oppressor completed his vile design? Hath he not forcibly taken possession of her bed?’ — Elinor assured him, that heaven had been pleased to preserve her from such pollution; but that, surprized by the shocking tidings of his death, she had lately fallen into this her present state of melancholy. — William again pressed the hand of Ela. ‘Speak to me,’ cried he; ‘say that thou rejoicest at my return. — No word of congratulation! No look of joy? Is this the happiness which my busy fancy formed? Is this my reception?’ — The Countess gazed upon him, and seemed in violent agitation: but still she was unable to return his affection. Reason had not yet regained its seat. — At length, the Earl, whose heart was torn with anguish, bounded furiously from the ground where he had fixed his knee, and loudly demanding the vile murderer of his peace, issued forth in search of Raymond.

By this time the castle was in confusion. Chauvigny and his few attendants had been prevented, by superior numbers, from following Earl William. They expressed their surprize, and now began too late to perceive their danger. One of them, suddenly taking a horn from his side, prepared to give so shrill a blast, as would have reached the ears of their companions, and quickened their speed: but Grey, who now had the sole command, as suddenly prevented him, by declaring with a stern insolence, that the least alarm should prove immediate death to Lord William. His design, which he now sought to ex-

ecute, was to raise a violent broil and tumult in the castle, and to assassinate the Earl, in the confusion. — The presence and interposition of Raymond he deemed necessary; and he hastened to summon this Lord, to embrace the fair occasion of destroying his rival, which fortune presented to him. At first entering the apartment, his eyes were wounded by an object of terror, which at once confounded all his designs. Raymond had fallen upon his sword. Grey started back in amazement; and, in that moment, William entered and saw the unhappy Lord, pale and bleeding on the ground, who shut his languid eyes, as if ashamed to meet the countenance of him he had wronged. The art, the hypocrisy, the boldness and recollection of Grey, all deserted him. He stood trembling and confounded, awed by the presence of the Earl, as by that of a superior being. At length he attempted to retire; but William, drawing his sword, forbade him with a terrible authority, and demanded the meaning of what he now beheld. Raymond, lifting his eyes faintly, just found breath, at broken and painful intervals, to declare, that his own hand had done it. — ‘I have indeed wronged thee, Lord; nor could I endure thy triumph, and my own shame, yes, I have destroyed the noblest Lady. — But there stands the accursed wretch, the false and traitorous’ — Here his emotion grew too violent for his languid condition. He was seized with a sudden pang; he groaned and expired.

The Earl then, turning to Grey, exclaimed ‘Yes! Thou art the wretch who laboured to aggravate the distresses of Ela, with such infernal diligence. Thou art he who basely stole away my son.’ — Grey fell upon his knees, supplicating for mercy with the most abject and servile fear, and promising to restore young William. The Earl raised his arm, and prepared to strike the miscreant.’ ‘Kill me not!’ cried Grey, ‘or thy son is for ever lost. I alone know the secret of his present residence.’ Here a sudden and violent shout arrested the sword of William. His followers had arrived, had quickly forced the

the gates open, and rushed in a rapid torrent, through the halls. Les Roches and Chauvigny, Randolph and Oswald, directed by the out-cries of Grey, and the loud rage of Salisbury, forced in, just as the wicked agent of oppression was entreating for mercy. At sight of Oswald, despair pierced his soul heart; and when he espied young William led on and protected from the violence of the rout, he closed his eyes, and crouched to receive the deadly blow. "O shame to manhood!" cried Randolph, "shall such a slave die by the arm of William?—Look there! noble Lord: (pointing from the window to the body of Reginhald, which still hung from the oak) behold! thy just vengeance is prevented. Behold the punishment which befits such villainy! "Be it so," cried William, "well dost thou instruct me!" And, without farther respite, was Grey led forth to share the fate of his wicked brother.

The view of blood and death allayed the joy of William and his noble friends. The good old Knight was moved, and now seemed to regret that the just punishment of Grey, had not been inflicted but by absolute and violent power. All the late dismal effects of lawless oppression crowded into his mind; and he felt the want of that inestimable blessing, a wise, righteous, and well tempered rule.

The thoughts of Ela, and her unhappy condition, still diffused a gloom over the countenance of the Earl. His thanks and congratulations were grave and solemn. The body of Raymond was removed; his attendants were suffered to depart unmolested; order and tranquillity were restored in the castle; and Lord William was at leisure to inform his noble friends of that terrible impression, which her misfortunes had made upon his wife. They had scarcely begun to offer condolence and comfort, when Elinor appeared with earnest looks, beseeching the Earl instantly to visit her afflicted Lady. The sight of him had awakened her to some degree of reason, and his removal had excited in her mind a violent and dangerous emotion of fear and anxiety. He hastened to her presence, lead-

ing his young son, who ran to the arms of his mother. She hung upon the dear objects with tenderness and pleasure, and uttered some words of joy. That melancholy which had clouded her noble mind, began gradually to dissipate. At length she looked, as if roused from a dream of misery; returned the ardent caresses of her husband, and breathed out her pious thanks to that goodness which had preserved him. A little time so far contributed to compose her mind, that she required the story of her husband's fortunes and dangers. But this he suspended, until her health should be confirmed, and her mind less subject to violent emotions.

Jacqueline was now arrived; had embraced her father and her lover, and was presented to the Countess. At sight of her, Ela felt some agitation, and recollected the tidings which Oswald had conveyed to her. But when William informed her, that he had saved and protected this maid from danger; that she was daughter to a dear friend, to whom he owed his life; and betrothed to a noble youth, both of whom were now in the castle; she embraced her with a tender affection, and secretly felt some shame at her former suspicions. And now the two Barons of France, and the old Knight, were admitted to offer their congratulations to the Countess. The friends of Earl William crowded from different parts to share his joy, and the castle was for some days a scene of gladness and festivity. But Chauvigny, impatient to compleat his happiness gently urged to Les Roches the necessity of returning to France. William was soon acquainted with their purpose. 'Not so!' said he, 'Shall I not be witness of the happiest now to crown the virtues of that dear maid, the lovely companion of my dangers, and comforter of my distress? Here, even here, shall her plighted hand be given to Lord Chauvigny!' — Les Roches consented; the nuptial rites were prepared, and celebrated with all due solemnity.

The two sons of Randolph had attended Jacqueline to the castle; and now she earnestly entreated their father to permit them to accompany her to France.

'They

‘ They shall be my Knights,’ said she, ‘ and shall be treated with all honourable care. The Countess requested, with equal earnestness, that Randolph would permit them to live with her son. But the fond father could not yield to these solicitations: he declared that his sons must first endeavour to render themselves more worthy of such favour.

The faithful Elinor still attended on her beloved mistress, and was entertained with an affection which made the remembrance of her former misfortunes less bitter. Her brother too found that respect and reward which his honest zeal had so justly merited.

The resentment of the Earl against Lord Hubert was in some degree disarmed, when he received the tidings, that this wicked favourite had forfeited the royal grace, and was ignominiously banished. He now reflected on his wrongs without emotion. Eliza too seemed to forget her sufferings; and each was the more endeared to the other, by the late dangers and distress of their separation.

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